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What Digital Camera

October 2007 Issue 127 £3.99

What to buy... and how to use it

DSLR Shoot Out!

Canon EOS 30D
Pentax K10D
Nikon D80

Are these DSLRs worth the price?

GROUP TEST

£650 £550 £650

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16 online and high street printing services rated

5p each

AUTUMN LANDSCAPES

20 pages of tips, techniques and inspiration

FREE INSIDE!

PLUS: Olympus E410 owner feedback • 10 compacts from £100-£350

What Digital Camera

October 2007 - Issue 127 - Contents

INSIDE YOUR FREE! MAGAZINE

Learn how to capture Autumn Landscapes
- Views
- Lighting
- Close Ups and Still Life
- Editing
- Gear

What to buy...

06 Gear News
Details of the latest gear

13 Insider's Guide
Equipment advice, recommendations, galleries and your questions answered

39 Tried and Tested
Reviews of all the latest products, from DSLRs and compacts to software

40 DSLR Shoot Out!
ON THE COVER: We give three semi-pro DSLRs a thrashing to find the best

51 Prints From Digital
ON THE COVER: Where should YOU be getting your printing done?

59 £150 Compacts
Six mid-range compacts get pitted against each other in our group test

64 Canon S5 IS
ON THE COVER: Canon's latest super-zoom compacts on test

65 Sanyo VPC-HD2
Video and photo hybrid compact

65 Olympus mju 750
Weatherproof wedge with 5x zoom

66 Sony W200
12MP model with HD output

66 Nikon L11
Budget point-and-shoot model

67 Canon Pixma 9500
A3+ professional printing workhorse

PLUS! Crumpler Pretty Boy Backpack, Transcend Hard Drive, Imagenomic Software, National Geographic Bags

127 Buyer's Guide
ON THE COVER: More than 1,000 cameras, lenses and accessories listed

and how to use it

24 My Digital Camera
This month's best readers' images

30 HDR Photography
ON THE COVER: WDC investigates this exciting processing technique

73 Learning Zone
Getting the most from your gear

75 Master Your DSLR
This month we take a look at ISO

81 Creative Filters
ON THE COVER: Learn how to have fun with these colourful companions

87 Technique Q&A
Your problems, our answers

90 Evening Class
Martin Evening passes his verdict on a selection of your photos

94 Take That
Your images from last issue's challenge

96 Photoshop Challenge
Win a copy of Adobe Lightroom!

On The Cover

p81
p40
p30
p64
p51

The UK's BIGGEST Buyer's Guide p127

30 pages of digital SLRs, compacts, lenses, tripods, printers and lots, lots more

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'Garden bistro' shot on Pentax DSLR by Richard Annette

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and an eye
for detail

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K100D Super

SR Shake Reduction

PENTAX

Our Cameras

Here's what the WDC team uses

Nigel Atherton
Nikon D200
Editor
Last year I splashed out on a Nikon D200, and at the moment my favourite lens is a 70-300mm VR, which covers most situations.

Paul Nuttall
Olympus E-410
Staff Writer
I use whatever is in the stock cupboard, but at the moment I'm enjoying the Olympus E-410 which I took on holiday as it's so small.

Matt Golowczynski
Canon 350D
Sub Editor
I use a Canon 350D with the EF 17-40mm lens, which together provide great colour, saturation and pin-sharp shots.

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Welcome...

..to the October issue, and what an exciting month it's been. Canon and Nikon have finally revealed their latest DSLRs and boy was it worth the wait. Not only do we get four new DSLRs, what's more impressive is that Nikon has finally released a full-frame model, hopefully paving the way for other manufacturers to do the same.

In this month's main feature, we explore HDR photography and show you how to get the most from your images using this creative technique, while three mid-range DSLRs get tested head-to-head to find the best buy for around £600.

We've also put six compacts to the test and have a look at Canon's latest bridge model, the Powershot S5 IS. Continuing where we left off last month, we take a closer look at filters – this month exploring their fun and creative uses, while Martin Evening assesses your images and imparts his wisdom.

See you next month.

Nigel Atherton
nigel_atherton@ipcmedia.com

What Digital Camera
What to buy... and how to use it

Gear News

For *today's* hot photography news visit **www.whatdigitalcamera.com**

Canon And Nikon Go Head To Head

Canon and Nikon release two new DSLRs each

Following months of rumours and speculations, Canon and Nikon have finally lifted the lid on their latest mid-range and top-end DSLR offerings.

Nikon has indicated the company's new direction away from CCD-based cameras, with the announcement of its D300 and D3 models. Both incorporate brand new CMOS sensors, with the Nikon D3 breaking away from the traditional DX (APS-C) sized sensor and into full-frame for the first time. The new Pro spec model features a full-frame 12.1MP sensor, which the company is calling FX format, and allows a larger pixel pitch, incorporating gapless micro lenses for better light capture and retention of information, the company claims.

The D300, meanwhile, maintains the Nikon DX format sensor, but with a 12.3MP pixel count and a sensitivity range of ISO 200-3200, with a boost up to 6400. In addition, the D300 features an anti-dust solution, using vibration of the low pass filter to dislodge dust on camera start up, or shut down.

Both cameras share a host of new technology, including Nikon's new Expeed ASICs processor, which is expected to feature in all next-generation Nikon cameras. The processor is said to consume less power, improve start-up time and burst speed and deliver superior image quality.

Each model has a 3in LCD screen with a 170° viewing angle, with an impressive 920,000 dot resolution, allowing accurate focus and detail checks. The screens can also, for the first time on Nikon DSLRs, be used in Live Mode for live viewing and composition of the scene to be photographed.

Canon, meanwhile, has finally confirmed the release of the EOS 40D model, replacing one of the most popular semi-pro DSLR cameras, the 30D.

Powered by Canon's DIGIC III imaging processor, the camera boasts a 10.1MP CMOS sensor, a 6.5fps JPEG burst rate and the same live-view mode as debuted on their 1D Mark III model. A 3in LCD screen adorns the back of the unit, while Dust Removal technology and an improved 9-point AF system also feature.

The magnesium alloy construction is coupled with weather resistance to meet the needs of the most demanding photographer in the most challenging situations while the menus have been adapted from those of the 1D models to provide ease of use and functionality.

Following on from its EOS 1D Mark III model announced earlier in the year, Canon has also announced a full-frame sibling in the shape of the EOS 1Ds Mark III.

Boasting a 21-megapixel CMOS sensor, the camera inherits much from the 1D model with its 3in LCD screen, live-view mode and Dual DIGIC III imaging processors. A 5fps burst rate shoots for up to 56 JPEG frames, and 12 Raw frames, while the viewfinder has been redesigned to be even brighter and has a wider viewing angle.

Nikon's cameras are expected in November, with body-only price tags of £1299 and £3399.99 for the D300 and the D3, respectively. Canon's EOS 1Ds Mark III will be available in a body-only option with an RRP of £5,999.99, while the EOS 40D will come in a kit with the EF-S 17-85mm IS USM lens for £1,199.99 and in a body-only option for £899.99. For a list of the cameras' main specifications, see right.

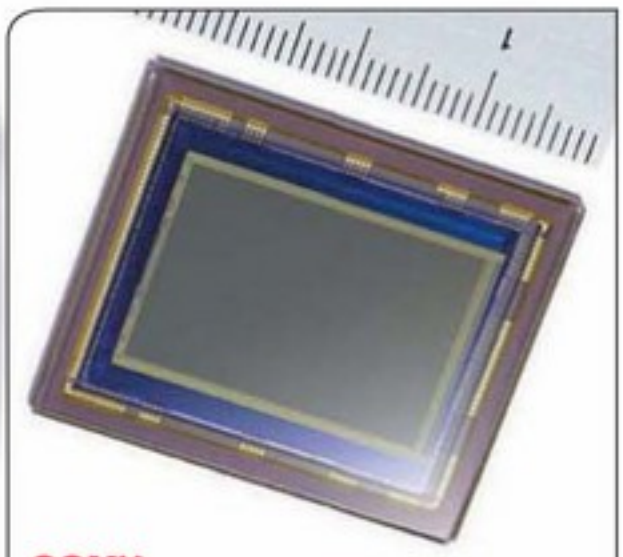
www.whatdigitalcamera.com

Canon 40D

PRICE (body only)	£899.99
MP	10.1 Effective
Sensor	22.2x 14.8mm CMOS sensor RGB Colour filter array
Viewfinder	Eye-level pentaprism 95% coverage
LCD	3in TFT LCD 230,000 pixels Live view
Sensitivity	ISO 100-1600 Enhanced: 3200
Mount	EF/EF-S
Storage	Compact Flash type I or II (inc FAT32)
Dimensions	146x108x74mm
Weight (no battery)	740g
Burst buffer	Large/Fine JPEG: 75 frames RAW: 17 frames
Colour space	sRGB Adobe RGB
A/D conv	14 bit

Nikon D300

PRICE (body only)	£1299
MP	12.3 Effective
Sensor	23.6x 15.8mm CMOS sensor RGB Colour filter array
Viewfinder	Eye-level pentaprism 100% coverage
LCD	3in TFT LCD 922,000 pixels Live view
Sensitivity	ISO 200-3200 Enhanced: 100-6400
Mount	Nikon F , AF
Storage	Compact Flash type I or II UDMA & Microdrive
Dimensions	147xl14x74mm
Weight (no battery)	825g
Burst buffer	JPEG Large/Normal: 100 frames RAW: TBC
Colour space	sRGB Adobe RGB
A/D conv	14 bit



SONY

New CMOS

No word on a new DSLR as yet, but Sony has confirmed the production of a 12.47-million-pixel APS-C size CMOS imaging sensor. Called 'IMX021' the sensor is widely believed to be employed in Sony's next consumer-level DSLR. Reprts state that the sensor offers low noise and allows high burst shooting up to 10.39fps. The news comes a month after the company announced its commitment to CMOS sensor development, funding almost $500m into its principal manufacturing facility. Sony states that it will position the sensor as 'a key device capable of generating new added value in the high-growth digital SLR camera market'.

Nikon D3

PRICE (body only)	£3399.99
MP	12.1MP
Sensor	36x 23.9mm CMOS sensor RGB Colour filter array
Viewfinder	Eye-level Pentaprism 100% coverage
LCD	3in TFT LCD 922,000 pixels Live view
Sensitivity	ISO 200-6400 Enhanced: 100-25600
Mount	Nikon F, AF coupling & contacts
Storage	Dual Compact Flash Type I or II UDMA & Microdrive and FAT32
Dimensions	160x157x88mm
Weight (no battery)	1240g
Colour Space	sRGB Adobe RGB
A/D conv	14 bit

Canon IDs Mark III

PRICE (body only)	£5999.99
MP	21.1MP
Sensor	36x 24mm CMOS sensor RGB Colour filter array
Viewfinder	Eye-level pentaprism 100% coverage
LCD	3in TFT LCD 230,000 pixels Live view
Sensitivity	ISO 100-1600 Enhanced: 50-3200
Mount	EF
Storage	Compact Flash Type I or II UDMA SD/SDHC Card slot
Dimensions	150x160x80mm
Weight (no battery)	1205g
Colour Space	sRGB Adobe RGB
A/D conv	14 bit

SIGMA

Two New Flashguns

Sigma has added two flashguns to its range, in the form of the EF 530 DG ST and EF 530 DG Super models. Both models have been designed to work with 'the latest TTL auto exposure systems of all popular manufacturers' digital and film SLR cameras', with each having a guide number of 53.

The EF 530 DG ST model features a manual mode, illumination from 17mm when used with built-in the Wide Panel and an Autozoom function, which sets the optimum illumination angle in accordance with the lens' focal length.

The EF 530 DG Super, meanwhile, boasts an array of functions such as high-speed flash, multi-pulse flash and a manual mode, and an Auto Power-Off mode to help save battery power by shutting off the display.

Both models are available for Sigma AF, Canon AF, Sony AF, Nikon AF and Pentax AF systems, with RRPs of £129.99 and £219.99 for the DG ST and Super models, respectively. For more information visit www.sigma-imaging-uk.com

CANON & NIKON

New Lens Releases From The Big Two

Canon and Nikon have supplemented their new DSLRs with a range of new lenses.

Three new telephoto lenses have been announced in Nikon's AF-S range – all of which boast the company's Vibration Reduction II image stabilisation technology and Nano Crystal Coating. The lenses are the AF-S 400 mm F2.8G ED VR, the AF-S 500 mm F4G ED VR and the AF-S 600 mm F4G ED VR and will be available from November.

Two additional lenses – the AF-S 14-24 mm F2.8G ED and the AF-S 24-70 mm F2.8G E – have also been announced, with compatibility for both the standard DX sensor size and Nikon's new FX sensor, as debuted on the D3 model. Both lenses feature Nikon's Silent Wave Motor and ED glass and will also be available in November, with guide prices announced in September.

Canon, meanwhile, has launched a mark II version of their EF 14mm f/2.8 USM L lens. Boasting a 114° angle of view, the redesigned lens incorporates aspherical and UD elements along with a USM motor. Its EF-S series of lenses benefits with the arrival of two new models, the EF-S 18-55mm f/3.5-5.6 IS and EF-S 55-250mm f/4-5.6 IS. Both lenses are the first in the EF-S line to incorporate a four-stop Image Stabiliser with the latter lens also featuring an Ultra-Low Dispersion (UD) element.

The EF 14mm lens will be priced at £1799.99, with the EF-S 18-55mm lens at £159.99. Meanwhile the EF-S 55-250mm lens will carry a £239.99 price tag.

For more information on Canon and Nikon's new lenses, visit their websites at www.canon.co.uk and www.nikon.co.uk

KINGSTON

Card Boost

Kingston Technology has announced it is increasing the write speed of its 'CompactFlash Ultimate' memory cards. With write speeds of 266x, the memory cards will now offer twice the minimum sustained write speed previously available in the Ultimate line, and are designed to maximise the performance of digital cameras. For more information visit www.kingston.com.

HAMA

New Gadgets

Consumer electronics company Hama has released a range of products designed to make the photographer's life easier. Two card readers lead the way in the ingenious new line, the first of which doubles as a USB hub, with the ability to read from four memory card slots and three USB ports. The second card reader also serves as a non-slip mouse mat, providing two USB ports and three memory card slots. A further product to be released is the new Cleaning Wizard, an ergonomically designed monitor cleaning solution complete with integrated monitor cleaning liquid. Both of the card readers have an SRP of £24.99, while the Cleaning Wizard will be available at an SRP of £12.99. For further information and to purchase the products, visit www.hama.co.uk

CANON

Canon Launches New Multifunctionals

Canon has revitalised its printer and multifunctional range, with the release of twelve new products.

The Pixma range sees the introduction of ten new products – eight multifunctionals and two single function printers – with emphasis on usability and quality results. The line-up features a host of automated technology, from Auto Skew correction for the correct alignment of scanned documents to an Auto Image correction system, which uses Face Detection and Scene Analysis technology to automatically correct exposure errors and colour tonality.

The MP970 model sees the further continuation of Canon's existing FINE, ChromaLife and Dual Colour Gamut Processing Technology, and improves on the MP810 by incorporation a larger LCD screen and a revised user interface. With LED lights 'virtually eliminating warm-up time' and support for Bluetooth, Ethernet and PictBridge, the MP970 confirms its position as Canon's flagship multifunctional model. Two further models – the MP520 and MP610 – support the range.

Canon's FINE technology continues its evolution, with its extra-fine nozzles able to produce 'virtually grain free photo lab-quality prints'. Together with its ChromaLife 100 technology, Canon claims that prints, appropriately protected, can last up to 100 years using this system.

Two entry-level models – the MP210 and MP220 – replace the MP160 and MP180 respectively, bringing speed and ease of use to the fore. The Quick Start feature allows documents to be scanned in between 2 and 4 seconds from powering up, with Auto Image Fix technology helping to rectify image flaws.

The new range has been tailored to current market trends, where the sale of single function printers is slowing, being steadily replaced by the popularity of multifunctionals.

September will see the range's release. For more information visit **www.canon.co.uk**

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Choose from 34 different types of KOOD Round Optical Glass Filters, in sizes from 25mm-105mm. All are mounted in KOOD filter frames that are so good several quality manufacturers buy their frames from us.

KOOD filters are packed in round, twist-lock boxes, so they take up as little room as possible in your camera bag.

Now available are: Infra Red R720 filter (10 sizes from 49mm - 86mm) and Neutral Density filter x8 (11 sizes form 37mm - 86mm)

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KOOD Underwater Filters are manufactured in our UK factory in all sizes and we can make discs and squares to your specified size as well.

- Blue Water for seas with coral in them
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FOUR THIRDS

New Website For Four Thirds Users

A new photography magazine and community has hit the web, targeting users of the Four Thirds DSLR camera system.

The 'Four Thirds User' site aims to meet the massive resurgence of interest in Olympus, Panasonic and Leica DSLR camera systems and – including cameras, lenses and system accessories. Run by Ian Burley, editor of 'Digital Photography Now', the site features news, reviews, tutorials and information about the camera systems, as well as a discussion forum and user photo gallery to compare tips and ideas with other users.

To celebrate the site's launch, 'Four Thirds User' is running a prize draw to give away an Olympus E-510 DSLR camera – the most recently introduced Four Thirds model. For more information visit **www.fourthirds-user.com**

NEW COMPACTS

22 New Compact Releases

Canon, Olympus, Samsung and Sony have announced their latest compact releases – between them introducing 22 new models.

Canon's G9 replaces its popular G7 model, now boasting Raw shooting as well as a 12MP sensor and 6x optical zoom. Olympus updates its SP550UZ model, with the SP560UZ gaining a megapixel, and both the mju and FE ranges also getting new members. Samsung add the 12MP NV20 model to its compact portfolio while Sony add the stylish T200 featuring a 3.5in touch-screen LCD and 5x optical zoom. For the full list see below.

NEW CAMERAS AT A GLANCE

CAMERA	MP	LENS	COMMENTS
Canon A650 IS	12	6x	2.5in vari-angle LCD screen alongside full manual control
Canon A720 IS	8	6x	DIGIC III processor with Face Detection
Canon G9	12	6x	Raw mode and a 3in LCD screen with Image Stabilisation
Canon SX100 IS	8	10x	First in a new range, with a redesigned easy-to-use layout
Canon Ixus 860 IS	8	3.8x	28mm wideangle lens joins a 3in LCD screen
Canon Ixus 960 IS	12	3.7x	Titanium body with strong zoom and XGA movie mode
Olympus FE-270	7	3x	Entry-level point and shoot with 2.5in LCD screen
Olympus FE-280	8	3x	TruePic III processor is joined by BrightCapture Technology
Olympus FE-290	7	4x	Wideangle lens and 3in LCD in the budget FE range
Olympus FE-300	12	3x	A high resolution sensor and BrightCapture Technology
Olympus Mju 790	7	3x	Shockproof and waterproof with a 2.5in LCD screen
Olympus Mju 820	8	5x	Face Detection technology adds to a 2.7in LCD screen
Olympus Mju 830	8	5x	Dual Image Stabilisation in a weatherproof body
Olympus Mju 1200	12	3x	A 2.7in LCD screen and Shadow Adjustment Technology
Olympus SP-560UZ	8	18x	Update to SP550UZ model with Dual Image Stabilisation
Samsung i85	8	5x	3in LCD touch-screen with a range of multimedia facilities
Samsung NV8	8	3x	Smart Touch user interface with a maximum 3200 ISO
Samsung NV15	10	3x	Auto Contrast Balance features along with Face Detection
Samsung NV20	12	3x	High-resolution sensor with Smart Touch Interface
Sony T70	8	3x	A 3in LCD touch screen and maximum 3200 ISO feature
Sony T200	8	5x	Huge 3.5in LCD touch-screen and Face Detection
Sony H3	8	10x	Advanced Sports Shooting mode with a strong zoom

What Digital Camera

Next Month

PENTAX K100D SUPER

DOES IT LIVE UP TO ITS NAME?

TELE-ZOOM GROUP TEST

WHICH 50-200MM ZOOM SHOULD YOU BUY?

FLASH!

It's the saviour of the universe! Don't miss our in-depth investigation into what all that technology and jargon is all about

GET YOUR WHITES RIGHT

No it's nothing to do with soap powder, it's our complete guide to mastering your camera's white balance control

FREE 20 PAGE GUIDE TO SHOOTING

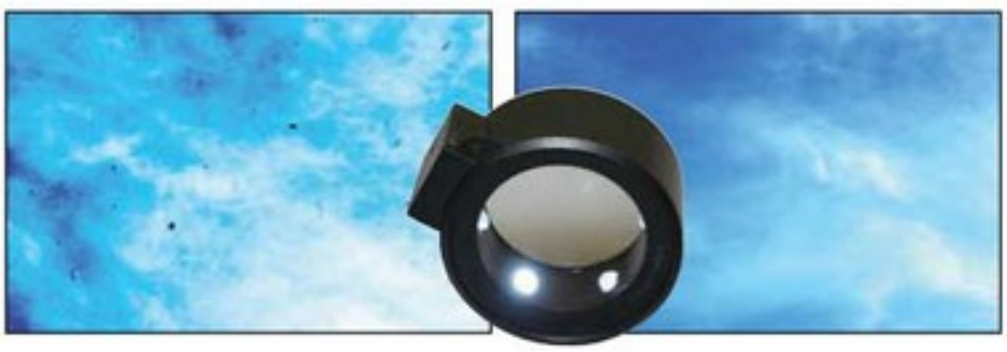
From Dusk to Dawn

Visible Dust ... The key facts you need to know about sensor cleaning

Using years of experience in biochip technology, Visible Dust is a Canadian company that has built a strong reputation based on scientific research into removing dust from delicate objects, such as digital SLR sensors.

The birth of the DSLR is widely acknowledged as a huge advance in image making for everyone from professional photographers to weekend hobbyists. However, despite camera manufacturer's best efforts, there is still one area that continues to baffle the technology - dust. For the pro's, it costs hours in editing time. For the amateurs, it more often than not results in ruined photographs.

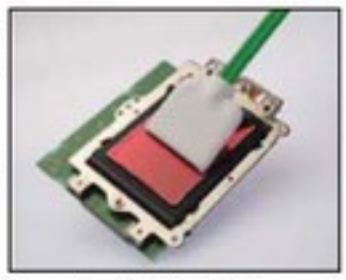
Visible Dust is a complete camera cleaning system, developed through science to be safe, simple to use, and more effective than any other system on the market.



The process begins with simply checking your sensor for dust using the new Sensor Loupe™. Featuring six Ultra-brite™ LEDs for illumination, and K9 optical-quality glass to magnify your sensor by 5x, dust is easily visible. No dust? Don't clean! - Save time and consumables.

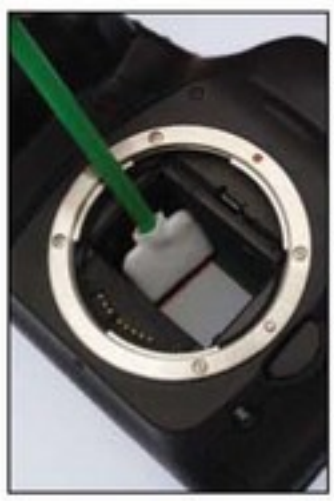
Some 90% of the dust that finds its way to your sensor is "dry" dust - often household dust or pollen which enters the camera easily during lens changes. Many inferior systems at this stage suggest going straight to the wet swab - massively dangerous to your sensor as they scrape the debris along.

Visible Dust first recommends a "Dry Clean" with the Arctic Butterfly®. A unique product using Super-Charged Fibre technology, The Arctic Butterfly® attracts dust into its fibres, completely removing the dust from your camera. The Arctic Butterfly® is simple and easy to use, even when you're out in the field.



On occasions where dust has become welded to your sensor, Visible Dust provides a full "wet" cleaning system too.

All Visible Dust Sensor Cleaning Swabs™ incorporate a patented "mini-channel with contour" design which ensures even saturation at the sensor surface, but also prevents pooling and the associated streaks typical of other swab systems. Sensor Cleaning Swabs are manufactured in sizes specific to the sensor in your camera, which in turn reduces the number of passes required over the sensor - minimal contact, minimal risk.



The swabs partner an advanced range of cleaning fluids. All Visible Dust cleaning fluids are supplied in small bottles and are totally Methanol free (a substance known to be highly flammable, and damaging to DSLR sensors) so are perfect for travel.

An immaculate camera doesn't end with a clean sensor though! Often, it's dirt from other areas inside the camera that transfers to the sensor, and even your focusing screen. The Visible Dust system takes this into account, and offers solutions for Chamber Clean™ for cleaning the camera mirror chamber, Focusing Screen swabs for a clear picture through the viewfinder and even Corner Swabs™ for the hard-to-reach parts of the sensor.

For more information on the hot topic of sensor cleaning, take a look at www.sensorcleaning.com. For further information on Visible Dust products, or your nearest stockist, contact the distributor for Great Britain, Kata UK on 01293 823232 or visit www.visibledust.com

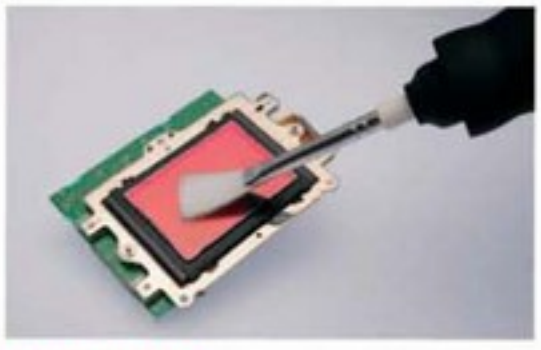
3 Steps to Dust Free Images

1: Check

New! Sensor Loupe™

- Using high quality K9 optics, magnify your sensor 5x to check for dust
- Avoids unnecessary cleaning andsaves time and consumables

2: Dry Clean



Famous! Arctic Butterfly

- Super-Charged Fibres lift dust away from your sensor - *and out of your camera*
- The brush is spun outside of your camera to recharge fibres
- Removes harmful debris prior to wet cleaning - *unique to VisibleDust*
- A portable, simple, fast solution for 90% of dust problems

3: Wet Clean

Advanced! Swab System

- Removes 'welded' dirt, streaks and stains
- Sensor size specific - *minimal passes*
- Advanced scientific fabrics - *like no other swab on the market*
- Range of cleaning solutions available
- Safe on your sensor and safe for travel
- Simple, safe and effective cleaning

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VisibleDust

What Digital Camera
What to buy... and how to use it

Insider's Guide

THIS MONTH

Hot or Not? p14
Reader reviews of the Olympus E-410

Test Drive p17
The Zigview S2 gets a test drive

Help! p19
Where, what & how should I buy?

15 pages of your reviews, buying advice and questions

Join us in our mission to reward excellent service

When buying camera gear, the quality of the service is as important as the price. That's why we started the Good Service Awards. Whenever you buy an item of photo equipment log on to our website and rate the service on our scale of 1-10. Each year we award those photo retailers that achieved the highest average ratings. Last year Camera World scooped our online retailer category, Digital Depot won the Independent retailer and London Camera Exchange was voted the best multiple.

We'll be naming 2007's best retailers in December, so get your votes in. It's easy, and only takes a minute or two. Here's how:

1. Visit www.whatdigitalcamera.com
2. Click on the Good Service Awards link
3. Fill in the short online form. Done!

THIS MONTH'S TOP RATED RETAILERS:

ONLINE

1. www.picstop.co.uk	(9.85)
2. www.digitaldepot.co.uk	(9.60)
3. www.warehouseexpress.co.uk	(9.30)

INDEPENDENT

1. Camera World - 0207 636 5005	(9.80)
2. Digital Depot - 01438 367619	(9.50)

MULTIPLE

1. John Lewis	(8.90)
2. London Camera Exchange	(8.60)

Vote now at whatdigitalcamera.com

WORD ON THE STREET

Best deals this month...

Pentax K10D £489.99

Camera World have come up with some fantastic offers over the past few months, and their latest is no exception. Not only have they got the Pentax K10D 18-55mm kit on offer at the excellent price of £489.99, but if you purchase the K10D Power Grip at the same time it'll cost just £75, half its retail price. Simply quote 'WDC Word On The Street' either over the phone or in person to redeem the offer.

WWW.CAMERAWORLD.CO.UK

Batteries £free p&p

picstop.co.uk

So you're out and about taking fantastic photos, and just as you see that perfect moment the battery runs out. Sound familiar? Well maybe it's time to treat yourself to a spare battery. Now is as good a time as any thanks to Picstop's latest offer of free delivery on all equivalent batteries. Simply enter the code DIGCAMBAT at the checkout, or quote over the phone, until October 31st to claim the offer.

WWW.PICSTOP.CO.UK

Fujifilm Z5fd £128.55

PC World are offering a great deal for the style conscious. The 6MP Fujifilm Z5fd achieved 87% in our April review, and with a slim design and raspberry red body, it could be time to make the most of their £128.55 Web Exclusive price. Not only is delivery free, but that's a saving of over £20 on the in-store price.

WWW.PCWORLD.CO.UK

THIS MONTH'S TOP DEAL

Olympus E-510 £679.99 Twin Kit Bundle

Yet another offer from the guys at Camera World. The brand-new, WDC Gold-Award winning Olympus E510 is on offer this month, in the form of the double zoom kit bundle, including 14-42mm and 40-150mm lenses, a free Olympus spare battery and E-System Holdall, all for just £679.99. To redeem the offer quote 'WDC Word On The Street' and order either over the phone or in person.

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READER REVIEWS

Real readers, real reviews, this is your voice

Olympus E-410

What do WDC readers make of Olympus's semi-pro DSLR?

The Olympus E-410 is able to lay claim to being the world's smallest DSLR.

However, appearing less than a year after the release of the E-400, many were sceptical to just how many improvements would have been made. Yet the E-410 managed to incorporate several new and useful features such as a LiveMOS sensor, improved LCD resolution and Live View technology previously bestowed solely on compacts. But what do our readers make of the new model?

WHAT WE THOUGHT

The recently released Olympus E-410 earned 89% in its August review, and here are a few things we had to say about it...

- *'There's not a doubt that the E-410 is a significantly better camera than the E-400'*
- *'Even at ISO 1600, the noise that appears isn't unpleasant'*
- *'In use, it's fairly obvious that Olympus has tinkered under the bonnet to "supercharge" its latest model'*
- *'Great value and holds its own against comparably priced models'*

Alan Trinder

From: Cumbria

I've had the twin lens E-410 kit for about three weeks, and so far I am very pleased and impressed with it. Picture quality is good and the handling easy and intuitive. I bought it for the small size because – after a history of two SLR bodies and umpteen lenses and extras – I am now totally unwilling to carry heavy loads of bulky gear around, especially when I go walking on the hills. I've found that the E-410 is compact and light enough, making it easily at hand when required.

I have read some criticism of the viewfinder's small size, but I do not find it too small, or tunnel-like! I do appreciate the display of information (shutter speed, aperture, WB warning, focus confirmation, etc) and find it very helpful. Also, I take Raw format pictures and I am very impressed with the speed of loading, as compared with my compact cameras. At this early stage, I am very pleased that I bought the E-410 as it is meeting my needs.

WHAT'S HOT
- Compact and light
- Image quality

WHAT'S NOT
- Not much

Andrew Crowe

From: Glasgow

I love the fact that the E-410 is so small and light – it's very easy to carry around. I've also found the quality of the kit lens to be very good (and much better than Canon's).

The dial controls are easier to use than those on other DSLRs, while the Live View function with zoom is useful to have. Raw and JPEGs can be customisable and allow good control over quality and size, while image quality is great and noise is minimal.

On the downside, I've found that the Noise Reduction and sharpening need to be altered in order to acheive decent JPEGs, and the focus LED light is disabled for manual lenses. In addition, the Live View only meters and focuses upon fully pressing the shutter (rather than half pressing) so there is always a long shutter delay. I've also found the viewfinder to be a little too small.

If I could change anything, it would probably be the focusing and metering of the Live View, so that it did so when half-pressing the shutter.

WHAT'S HOT
- Low Noise
- Kit lens

WHAT'S NOT
- JPEGs need adjusting

Gwyn Petcher

From: Nottingham

As this camera was out in the USA for a while before it hit our shores, I bought one as soon as it appeared on the shelves in New York. I had a brilliant OM2 in the early 80s and kept it for 17 years. Since then I have had Nikon cameras and a Canon EOS 30D, which I sold due to its magnetism to dust.

My first digital camera was an Olympus C-50 compact – again, a fantastic little camera, but I said that if Olympus brought out a digital SLR like the OM, I would buy one like a shot. I bought the E-400 and then I saw the specs for the E-410.

This camera is so far ahead of the E-400. The write speed to cards is far better, the size is fantastic, the controls are great and the lens is very good, especially for its size. This camera is staying with me for a long time. I usually shoot in Raw before converting, but in my mind, the picture quality is not that far behind the 30D. But at least I am not forever cloning dust spots out and cleaning the sensor. So you get all of this and you can carry it around all day without a problem. One slight problem is that the autofocus can sometimes have a bad day, but overall, nice one Olympus.

WHAT'S HOT
- Write speed
- Dust Removal technology

WHAT'S NOT
- Autofocusing

OLYMPUS E410: OVERALL AVERAGE SCORE 8/10

MORE VIEWS

We scoured the land for your E-410 soundbites

Thomas Keating

I'm relatively new to photography but have got the bug and decided to upgrade from my treasured compact to a DSLR. The E-410's Live View stood out for me, as did the price, and I haven't been disappointed.

John Ledbetter

For years I used the Olympus OM series film camera to my pleasure, and upon deciding to go digital, Olympus held obvious appeal. The weight of the E-410 is such that carrying it around all day is simple, and images produced are fantastic. A joy.

Lesley Rogerson

I was saving up for the E-400 for quite a while, and just when I had saved enough, the E-410 came out. And boy am I glad it did! The combination of the LiveMOS sensor, Live View and tiny body make the E-410 perfect for me!

NEXT MONTH

Canon EOS 5D

If you own one, email us at *wdc@ipcmedia.com* and tell us what you think of it

READER REVIEWS

Real readers, real reviews, this is your voice

READER REVIEW
Sony N2

Holly Kirkwood
From: London

This compact is operated entirely through a 3in LCD touch-screen, which in itself is approachable, self-explanatory and easy to see when composing a picture. It has an impressive ten megapixels but is compact enough to be slipped into the pocket when travelling.

The quality of the pictures is very high, though the camera sometimes has trouble adjusting to dark interiors. Sometimes it isn't immediately clear that the flash setting has to be changed in order to make the screen light enough to see. However, in general I find it deals with image contrast and sharpness adjustments well – once you get the hang of it.

I took the camera on holiday, where I wanted to take a certain amount of landscape shots, but unfortunately they didn't come out as well as I had hoped. It did, however, happily cope with everything else I asked of it, from shooting in the rain to close-ups of artisan pottery.

Reviewing and deleting pictures is very straightforward, and I like the fact that the camera allowed for lots of shots to be taken in rapid succession, which is useful if you want to capture moving targets.

Despite a few niggles, I've come to really like the camera and feel that its sleek, attractive styling makes it perfect for the fashion-conscious photographer.

READER DSLR REVIEW
Nikon D80

Lance Allen
From: Nottingham

I was looking to upgrade from my compact camera and had the fortune of being able to play with a friend's Nikon D50. I really enjoyed the Nikon interface and decided that it was for me. Upon coming to buy my DSLR, I thought I would see what the D80 had to offer – and I'm glad I did! One thing that sold it for me was the 10MP sensor, which allows me to crop my images and still maintain high image quality. The user interface is simple and an improvement over the D50, with little classy touches such as the backlit LED giving the feel that the extra money was well spent. The AF is swift, and the burst rate of roughly 3fps more than meets my needs. Images produced are consistent and striking, with the only real problem being Nikon's lenses, which can be a touch expensive. Overall though, it's a fantastic camera and one I would highly recommended.

GROUP TEST p40
See how the Nikon D80 fared against two of its rivals – Canon's 30D and Pentax's K10D – in our DSLR shoot out on page 40.

READER REVIEW
Canon MP600

Craig Trenter
From: Bucks

Canon's Pixma MP600 has everything I was hoping for and at an attractive price too. I found setting it up easy and the software is simple to use, while printing proves smooth, quiet and very quick. There are three different print settings to choose from, and even the fast mode is suitable for most purposes if you want to save ink. My photographs look sharp and have great contrast, while the colours are very pleasing and not too saturated.

The design of it is a little boxy and it isn't too pretty, but I didn't buy it for what it looks like so much as for its performance – you can't go wrong with this printer!

We Pay Cash For Your Reviews!

Send us a mini-test of your camera, a lens or accessory and you could win cold, hard cash – we pay £50 for each review published! Tests should be between 100-200 words, and be accompanied by a mugshot of you and, where relevant, a picture taken using the product. Email your review to wdc@ipcmedia.com, with the heading 'Reviews'.

TEST DRIVE £250

Zigview S2

The S2 is a remote viewer designed for photographing at awkward angles. WDC gave one to Philip John to try out

Philip John

From: Margate, Kent

What led you to choose this product?
The Zigview S2 is a remote viewfinder with monitor that attaches to the eyepiece of many DSLRs, allowing you to see what's going on through the lens and take photos with a cable release. Functions include preset interval shots, motion sensing photography and remote monitoring from up to 10m away.

The S2 is primarily designed for shooting at low, high and other awkward angles where it wouldn't normally be possible to see through the viewfinder. In addition, by splitting the TFT monitor from the viewfinder attachment and linking them together with the optional extension cable (5 or 10m), the Zigview can be used at even more extreme angles – perfect for self portraits, nature shots and low altitude aerial photography.

It all sounds good on paper, so I thought I'd see how it measured up in practice.

What were your first impressions?
Not that positive. The build quality was quite disappointing – it's made of flimsy plastic and the buttons look like something off a cheap gadget from a street market. Thin, easily bent pins are used to attach the monitor, image sensor and remote cable adaptor to each other, instead of bolts and screws. I assume they were trying to keeping it as light as possible but too much of a compromise has been made on a device that works out costing around £300 by the time you've added the optional extras.

Was it easy to set-up?
The first thing you need to do is to check the alignment of the screen with the viewfinder. I put the camera on a tripod, before photographing two corner walls and using this to check that the TFT monitor matched what was seen through the viewfinder. On my Nikon D80, no adjustment was required.

The menu is very comprehensive, with over 20 options, and you're unlikely to be using the Zigview every day, so this is one user manual you're likely to be taking with you on a shoot!

How does it perform in use?
The monitor rotates and tilts well on the camera and you can flip the image on the screen 180 degrees giving you plenty of flexibility with your shots. The TFT screen is acceptable, but lacks the clarity and resolution of the screens found on most consumer digital cameras and can be difficult to see in bright light.

Did you experience any problems?
Yes. The first time I used it I had it switched on for less than 15 minutes whilst setting it up but when I attempted to use it three weeks later, I found the battery was flat. I think it must have been a faulty sample as the battery life was quoted to last for two to three hours. The battery doesn't seems to hold its charge when unused and is simply too small (the size of a small mobile phone battery) to power this type of product, making it pretty useless for motion sensing and nature photography.

How would you rate the following:
Looks: It looks stylish, until you get up close.
Handling: Good. The tilt and rotate functions worked well and it was easy to clip on and off the viewfinder.
Performance: The screen quality was not as good as I'd hoped, particularly outdoors, and the battery life was major let down.
Value for Money: It's too expensive for what it is. You could buy a laptop for not much more.

Summary
The Zigview has a lot of potential as a photographer's tool but significant improvements need to be made to battery life, screen and build quality to justify its price.

ACCESSORIES p67
For other useful accessories for your camera see our tests of more kit on pages 67-69

Travel Light.

The world's first 13.9X for digital.

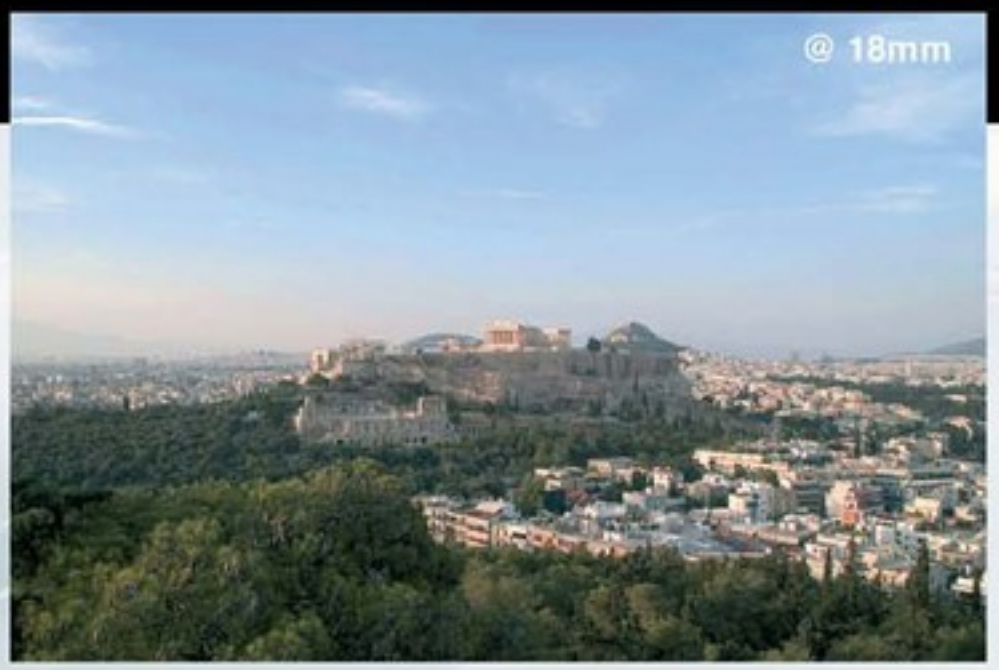
You can finally take both true wideangle and super telephoto shots with a single, astonishingly compact lens. With its 13.9x zoom range stretching from wider than 28mm to nearly 400mm*1,this is the world's most powerful zoom*2 - the perfect travelling companion for globe-trotting photographers.

*1 : 28-368mm when converted to 35mm format
*2 : In the category of photographic lens designed exclusively for digital cameras with smaller-size image. Researched by Tamron, August 2006.

For APS-C Digital

Exclusive use on digital SLR cameras with smaller-size imagers

AF18-250mm F/3.5-6.3 Di II LD Aspherical (IF) Macro



NEW

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HELP! Buying Advice

contact wdchelpfile@ipcmedia.com with your questions

Before you buy, read our essential advice and tips to make sure you get a good deal

BUYING Second-hand

With life cycles as short as six months and new-price erosion from the moment of the introduction of a new camera model, the result is that great deals can be found in second-hand cameras. There is less price pressure on lenses, but even so, second-hand lens bargains can also secured.

There are four usual sources of second-hand equipment: specialist photographic retailers, classified ads, online auction sites such as eBay, or a friend or acquaintance.

There are good reasons for buying from a shop that specialises in second-hand photographic equipment. It's in the interests of such establishments to thoroughly check both the equipment they buy in and even the background of the people they buy from. You should have less problem with faulty or stolen items. The better suppliers will clean and sometimes service their stock before putting it on sale. Importantly, you can visit the shop and personally examine the item you're considering before purchasing.

You will also be provided with some form of warranty – at least three months, with paid-for extended warranty options most likely offered too. And the goods must be of merchantable quality, otherwise you will have the right to a full refund according to trading standards regulations. The downside is that this is the most expensive way of buying second-hand equipment.

If you go down the route of buying through classified ads or auction sites, you need to be sure that you're protected, should the goods arrive faulty or don't arrive at all.

SHOPPING TIPS

• Try to make sure that you are supplied with the original packaging, manuals and accessories, as well as some kind of proof of ownership.

• Auction sites such as eBay usually list feedback scores from previous buyers. A quick glance at these will show if your purchase is coming from a reputable seller.

BUYING Online

If you know what you want, buying online can save you money. If you're unsure, it isn't so good, because you can't handle and compare the goods.

Some of the better online retailers have a telephone helpline so you can get sales advice, and of course a few also have a bricks and mortar operation as their base.

When buying online don't forget to factor in postage costs, and read their returns policy – one drawback of buying online is the hassle of returning faulty goods, or dealing with poor service. In general the well-known names are reliable, but do your research before buying from a name you don't know.

Price comparison sites such as PriceRunner show user ratings from previous customers.

Buying through auction sites such as eBay should be hassle-free, but be wary of prices that seem too good to be true.

BUYING Abroad

Differences in exchange rates and lower retail overheads can produce bargain prices in some foreign markets. In the US, some specialist camera retailers and mail order suppliers offer real bargains but smaller local outlets, often targeting tourists, can be much more expensive. Some manufacturers offer a worldwide warranty, but there are cases where people have had difficulty getting warranty service from the UK distributor after buying abroad. The personal allowance for importing goods into the UK from outside the EU is £145. A penny more and you'll be charged VAT and any applicable import duty on the whole amount. There's no duty on digital still cameras, but lenses incur 6.9%. If receiving imported goods via the post or courier, anything above £18 will be taxed.

BUYING ON THE High Street

High street stores are finding it tough in this online age, but a well-supported local store can be a tremendous asset, especially if it's staffed by friendly, helpful, knowledgeable people. The convenience of shopping locally and being able to handle and discuss the merits of an item with the salesperson is valuable and even if such retailers can't guarantee the very cheapest prices, surely great service is worth a modest premium?

Another advantage of buying locally is that faulty items can usually be exchanged and any warranty work managed via the shop rather than having to send it away yourself.

Of course, you don't want to fall foul of grossly uncompetitive pricing. Research your prospective purchase in advance and work out the comparative costs (not forgetting shipping) before deciding how much you'd be prepared to pay by buying locally.

READER QUESTIONS

The experts help you make the right choice

LIVE VIEW

Why No Live View?

David Telling

via email

I'm considering upgrading to a Nikon D80 DSLR. Imagine my horror when I went to buy the camera, only to find out from the retailer that most DSLRs do not use the LCD screen to compose and take the shot; instead, you use the viewfinder to take the shot and the LCD to view the photo after taking it. Now, as a person who has never had a 35mm film camera, the thought of using a viewfinder instead of the LCD screen to take the shot is rather off-putting. I know that in certain bright conditions the LCD can be close to impossible to see, but I would still consider it an invaluable tool to compose the shot. It seems madness to me when these companies obviously have the technology to use the LCD screen, and yet they choose to use the viewfinder instead on their DSLRs (supposedly the Rolls Royce of digital cameras). Can you shed any light?

Matt replies: *The words 'never had a 35mm film camera' struck me as part of the answer to your question, David. The traditional construction of the SLR directed light around a pentaprism to the viewfinder, once it had entered the lens, and for many people switching from manual SLR systems forsaking this for an 'LCD only' option would be akin to sacrilege. But as with most things, technology constantly changes and one of the more interesting developments within the DSLR is the 'live view' mode, which Olympus has championed, and Canon also recently introduced it into its EOS 1D MkIII. No doubt for people like yourself upgrading from a digital compact, this will be something expected but I suspect that many DSLR users prefer to compose their pictures via the viewfinder, for a few reasons such as stability and handling. The option of both is an achievement in itself but manufacturers have to provide for the needs of the consumer, and I imagine that the proportion of 'live view' DSLRs which are available compared to those without simply reflect those needs. We did recently test the latest two Olympus DSLRs that feature live view; you can see how they did in our Buyer's Guide on p136.*

Will My Lenses Still Work?

David Brooke-Smith

From: Hants

I currently have a Nikon F80 and I am considering upgrading to a D40 DSLR. Will I still be able to use my film lenses on a D40? Will Nikon switch entirely to camera bodies that cannot use old lenses? What about the D50?

Matt replies: *It really depends on what you mean by 'use', David. Older F-mount lenses are still compatible with the Nikon D40 but limitations will come in the form of autofocusing and metering. As the D40 doesn't have its own focusing motor, it requires lenses that do – such as Nikon's AF-S and AF-I CPU lenses – but models such as the D50, D80 and above do have their own built-in motors and so would be fully compatible. Nikon did, however, announce last year that it would cease production of full-frame lenses and concentrate on its digital DX range instead, but, as yet, it doesn't look like this extends to the camera bodies themselves. Something also worth noting is that the price of the D80 has come down considerably and so if you are looking to invest in a DSLR, it may be worthwhile looking at that option as it will provide you with a greater choice of lenses in the future. The same applies to the D50, though as the D40 superseded it, there were a few tweaks and improvements which you may prefer.*

BYTE SIZE! Your quick problems... our quick answers

Battery Benefits

From: Ray Isca

What has the same spec as the Canon S5 IS but a lithium battery?

Matt replies: *Assuming it is a bridge camera you are after, the closest model would be Panasonic's FZ8 which has the same 12x optical zoom, optical image stabilisation and level of manual control, but one less megapixel and no face-detection. Look out for Panasonic's new FZ18 model though, which ticks all of those boxes as well as stretching to 18x optical zoom. Nikon's P5000 and Sony's H9 models may also be worth a look, though neither match the full spec of the S5 IS (turn to page 64 for our review).*

Wideangle Woes

From: Gordon Barnes

I'm a surveyor and need a small camera with a wideangle lens that will fit in a pocket.

Matt replies: *Two cameras spring to mind: the Ricoh R6 and Panasonic FX30 – the latter of which scored a fantastic 90% in last month's issue. Both have a 7MP sensor and a 28mm wideangle lens, though the R6's, despite being only slightly thicker, does have double the optical zoom of the FX30 and a marginally larger LCD screen. The FX30 has a slightly brighter lens and higher ISO capabilities, and so for interiors may be just what you need. Expect to pay £200 for either model.*

Battle Of The Giants

Torgut Mehmet

From: London

I'm looking to buy a DSLR for the first time. I'm down to the Nikon D200 or the EOS 30D. I've decided not to go for the likes of the D80 or a 400D as they felt quite small in my hands. I'll be using it for press work, so need something a little tough. I know there's a price difference of around £300 between the D200 and 30D but is the Nikon worth the extra? I really wanted the Nikon but others keep pointing me towards Canon as the company's support is second to none.

Matt replies: *You're not the first person – and certainly won't be the last – to be torn between the big two brands, with both manufacturers producing what have gone on to be a couple of highly regarded, semi-professional DSLRs. The Nikon edges slightly ahead in terms of megapixels, but much of the other specification is similar. We've had the pleasure of testing both and, overall, the D200 did fare slightly better in most areas, finishing up with our Gold Award.*

Neither camera would be a bad choice, so it would be wise to base your decision on a broader criteria; what lenses do you envisage supplementing your body with? Are there any bodies that would make for a worthy upgrade? Both handle very differently too, so maybe it would be an idea to try both and see which feels the most comfortable. Given that the price difference between the two is probably a little less than you mention, with average body-only street prices of the 30D and D200 at around £600 and £840 respectively, it does simply look like a case of getting what you pay for.

More Needed From Movies

Eamon Hegarty

via email

I am a very unsophisticated point-and-shoot compact user and I bought my current camera, a Pentax Optio S5i, a year or two ago mainly on the basis of its small size. The camera is fine but the quality of the video playback is very poor. I'd like to buy a new camera with a better video but maintain the small size and light weight as far as possible. Budget isn't a great issue; are you able to advise me on this?

Matt replies: *Your camera can record video clips at 15fps on a 320x240 resolution, which by today's standards is a little behind. The standard nowadays is a 30fps VGA setting at 640x480, although this does depend on what image format you choose. A higher-resolution XGA mode – which records 15fps at 1024x768 – is now available on certain Canon compacts, but none matches the size or weight of your own. SVGA and WVGA modes are now available on compacts, the latter of which can be found on the new Panasonic FX33 and FX55 models, recording in a 848x480 widescreen format. Many more manufacturers are now adopting better-quality movie modes – something which in the past has been somewhat overlooked – so have a look to see if any of those models are small enough for your needs or maybe consider waiting for an XGA resolution mode to be incorporated into smaller bodies.*

MATT EXPLAINS

Worried about warranties? Allow Matt to explain all...

Warranties

When buying a new camera, the offer of taking out an extended warranty is usually offered upon its purchase. 'No, no, I'm covered on my home insurance' is the usual reply given, often employed as a sales-assistant brush-off tactic. Indeed, most people are surprised to learn that accidental damage isn't covered by the manufacturer's guarantee – and some home insurance plans – and so give it a little more thought.

Usually, manufacturers give a year's warranty on their products – the exception being Olympus who give one two (with the second year as a European only warranty) and Nikon, who earlier this month began offering a two-year warranty on all of its compacts and DSLR bodies. The additional warranty offered (not by the manufacturer but usually by a third-party company) covers mechanical damage as well as accidental damage, but the terms and conditions vary from company to company, and so it's worth understanding exactly what their particular policy applies to. Sometimes, an unlimited number of repairs may be claimed, and if you have small children this could prove invaluable. In a previous job at a local camera store, I was often given the 'My child knocked it off the table and now the lens won't retract' excuse when faced with a broken camera, though I wouldn't be entirely surprised if this was occasionally used to scapegoat a child who couldn't yet defend themselves – I'm sure it happens!

But, of course, the price of this extended warranty usually reflects the value of the purchase, and so this escalating cost further adds to an already tricky dilemma. Many people believe that if something was to mechanically go wrong then it would happen within the first year, though this is not always the case, and the price of a repair can often exceed that of a new camera, should it be outside its warranty.

Many people believe something will go wrong within the first year

To many it's not a great deal, and people do tend to rely on their optimism to justify its dismissal. It's not always necessary, especially for cheaper compacts, but, and as I hope you'll agree, just a minute's consideration is more than a fair price to pay for years' worth of peace of mind.

Letters

Write to us at **wdc@ipcmedia.com**

Express Service

Chris Sayers
via email

In this day and age where customers have difficulty with companies not providing good customer service I'd like to praise Warehouse Express for their quick resolution to a problem that I had with my Nikon D200. Within two hours of making contact by email they had arranged for a replacement body to be sent to me, which was delivered the following day! I think that's outstanding service; well done Warehouse Express.

Editor's Reply: *Warehouse Express is among a handful of retailers than tend to dominate the top end of our Good Service Awards charts, based on customer satisfaction. This month's rankings are on page 13; if you haven't rated its service on the Good Service Awards section of our website yet I urge you, and everyone else who has bought something recently, to do so at www.whatdigitalcamera.com*

WDC from far and away

Gerrit Maas
From: South Africa

I'm writing this letter all the way from South Africa. Today I purchased the latest issue and cannot wait to read it from cover to cover. I always find your tests very informative and I'm currently making my next purchase decision on past tests – either a Nikon S200/S500 or the P500 as a substitute when not carrying my D200 with grip. I am also looking at the 50mm f/1.4 and 17-55mm f/2.8 lenses. Again, thanks for a fantastic magazine. Keep up the good work.

Editor's Reply: *Thanks Gerrit. I'm using the 17-55mm myself at the moment and it's a cracker. You can usually find plenty of used 50mm f/1.4 lenses at bargain prices at places like eBay.*

Selling Photos

Chris Heppenstall
From: Ramsbury

I'd like to congratulate you for your outstanding magazine which I've been reading since February and am now hooked on. WDC offers excellent reviews, and tips on taking the right picture, but there is one thing missing which I've come to notice. For those aspiring amateurs (including yours truly) who may like to sell pictures that they have taken, an article on copyrighting and selling photographs would be useful?

Editor's Reply: *It's on our 'to do list' Chris, so we'll be covering this popular topic in a forthcoming issue.*

DOUBLE TAKE

'Monkey Madness'

Sent in by Patrick Donaldson, from the Timbavati Game Reserve in South Africa, who says: 'I had been working with this chainsaw for a couple of hours, went inside for a drink of water, and when I came back outside I found I had been made redundant.' We've heard of monkeys with typewriters but this is ridiculous!

Got a funny photo? *Then send it to us at wdc@ipcmedia.com*

LETTER OF THE MONTH

WDC is into Recycling

Phil Bond
From: Cardiff

Your excellent August issue really broadened the scope for digital photography and beginners. I recently purchased the Sony Alpha A100, after first buying WDC and reading about the different features, and the good and bad points, from existing owners (in Hot or Not).

The thing that swung it for me was being a Minolta 35mm SLR owner, and with Minolta lenses, the mount lets me use my existing lenses as well. Your feature on using old lenses on DSLRs only added to my faith in my decision. Then your Editor's Last Word was about oldie-but-goodie flashguns.

Any hobby can be as expensive as you want it to be, so why not recycle? How about an article on old flashguns, their compatibility with the new digital cameras, and how we can use them to our advantage?

'She who must be obeyed' will always complain about and more gadgets filling the cupboards; what a way to win her over by showing her I'm really into recycling!

Keep up the good work guys.

Editor's Reply: *I hope you recycle the magazine, too! You'll be interested to know that next month's issue includes a major feature on flashguns, including the use of old flashguns on DSLRs.*

WIN! A GOODY BAG OF BOOKS

The sender of the Letter of the Month wins a selection of photo books worth at least £50. Send your letters to wdc@ipcmedia.com or to What Digital Camera magazine, Blue Fin Building, 110 Southwark Street, London, SE1 0SU.

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READER PICTURES

Send *your* best photos to whatdigitalcamera.com

My Digital Camera

Gil Azouri

From: Tel Aviv, Israel

CAMERA: Fuji S2 Pro
MAIN LENS: Nikon 17-55

Launched in 2002, Fujifilm's S2 Pro model featured a 6MP Super CCD sensor

I travelled to China two years ago for a period of two months.

I started in Hong Kong and made it all the way up to Beijing passing through the provinces of Guangxi, Yunnan and Sichuan. The entire trip was very exciting and it was amazing seeing the breathtaking landscapes and the wonderful people of China.

I think that the places that left me the deepest impressions are conveyed through my photographs, and they include the beautiful scenes of Yangshuo and Jiuzhaigou and the diversity of culture and people of the Yunnan province.

I like taking landscape shots mainly during the hours around sunrise and sunset in order to get the best available light. Using graduated ND filters enables me to balance the overall exposure when the sky is too bright. I prefer using this technique over digital HDR imaging even though in certain cases the HDR technique can yield great results.

During my visit to China and in the past three years, I've been using the Fujifilm S2 Pro DSLR. This camera and the newer models of the same line produce beautiful colours and skin tones that are very pleasing to the eye.

Just recently I switched to the Canon EOS 5D mainly because I needed the high detail and resolution and also because of the many advantages of using a full-frame digital camera.

GIL WINS...

A KATA BACKPACK

The Kata R-103 holds a DSLR body with up to a 300mm lens attached, an extra body and 4 to 5 lenses. RRP £169.95. For details visit **www.kata-bags.com**

Above: Guangxi Province
Crossing the Li River in early morning, in the Guangxi Province

www.kata-bags.com

Left Top: Fisherman
Li River cormorant fisherman at dawn
In China I used only two lenses, the Nikon AF DX 17-55mm f/2.8 and the Nikon AF 70-210mm f/4-5.6. Other than these two I also had a Tamron SP DI 90mm f/2.8 for macro work

Left Middle: Festival
At the Zhongdian Horse Festival
I thought this was an interesting picture to take at the festival because it shows the juxtaposition of traditional clothing and modern communicaton

Bottom: Li River
Crossing the Li River in early morning, Guangxi Province

Far Right Top: At Dawn
First light on the Li River
This was a particularly breathtaking scene and it was typical of the numerous photo opportunities that I encountered on my travels in China. Again I had to time it right in order to capture the quality of the dawn light

Far Right Bottom: Sunrise
Sunrise over the Li River, Yangshuo
I used a shutter speed of 1/10sec with aperture at f/11 for this photograph. The ISO I used was 100, and I set the lens focal length to 17mm

My Digital Camera

Caroline Harris

From: Staffordshire

CAMERA: Canon EOS 350D
MAIN LENS: Sigma 10-20mm

Despite being discontinued, you can still pick up Canon's 8MP 350D model for around £350 with an 18-55mm kit lens.

Like so many people who write in to WDC or send us their pictures, Caroline's once passionate interest in photography lay dormant for years until it was jolted back to life by the arrival of digital.

'I'd been interested in photography since the age of about ten,' she recalls, 'encouraged by my father, who taught me about taking pictures and showed me how to develop and print them in his makeshift darkroom. Even now I find the smell of developer and fixing solutions make me very nostalgic.'

Her interest in photography grew at college, where it formed a major part of her graphic design course. But as so often happens, life got in the way and her SLR fell out of use. Photography became a point-and-shoot exercise for Caroline for over a decade until recently, when all the talk about digital inspired her to invest in a DSLR. Having originally been recommended a Nikon D50 she found it too big for her and went instead for a Canon EOS 350D. 'It just felt so right in my hands,' she says. She has since expanded the system with the addition of a Sigma's 10-20mm and 70-300mm lenses, the former being her lens of choice.

Caroline has since completed a photography course at her local college, and was awarded the City & Guilds Student of the Year award. More of Caroline's work may be viewed by visiting her website at:

www.carolineharrisphotography.co.uk

CAROLINE WINS...

A NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC BACKPACK

The Earth Explorer Medium Backpack from the National Geographic range is perfect for photographic expeditions – featuring an intricate design to store your camera gear without compromising on space for hiking gear. RRP £119.95. Visit **www.supporthexperience.com** for more information on the National Geographic range.

Far Left Top: Crocus
Lens: 70-300mm Sigma Lens at 214mm /f8
Taken at a local garden centre. The Spring light was low and bright, and it really brought out the saturated colours of these pretty spring flowers. These were actually in a tray waiting for someone to buy them to take them home.

Far Left Bottom: A Rose by Any Other Name
Lens: 18-55mm kit Lens at 54mm, f/9
I took this as one of the pictures for my City and Guilds Portfolio. I loved the gentle colours and textures on this subject and took the picture using only natural light.

Above: Cornish Shed
Lens: Sigma 10-20mm lens at 17mm, f/11
During a particularly rainy day in Cornwall, we made our way to the beautiful gardens at Trebah. A stunning location when it's not absolutely tipping it down. I saw this en-route. The area around the garage was very small and I was glad to have had my newly acquired wideangle lens with me. I've put this image through Photoshop and applied an Orton Sandwich technique.

Middle: Scottish Barn
Lens: 18-55mm kit lens at 55mm, f/10
This was taken at a bird sanctuary in Dumfrieshire in Scotland. There were some really great farm buildings just by the entrance. Just as well really, as there weren't too many birds around on that day to photograph.

Bottom: Green Door and Red Brick Wall
Lens: 18-55mm kit lens at 54mm, f/9
This caught my eye at a local Craft Centre. I thought the red brick wall worked really well against the green. I had to wait a few minutes for the sun to come out to really boost the colours. I thought about closing the lock cover, but in the end decided to leave it as it was.

HOW TO PRODUCE

HDR Photography

What Digital Camera COVER FEATURE

Ever taken a once-in-a-lifetime shot, only to get it home and realise that the impact has been lost in translation? Maybe HDR is the solution...

WORDS AND IMAGES BY PAUL NUTTALL

What Digital Camera INVESTIGATES

The world of digital photography is one that is constantly evolving, with new and diverse techniques and treatments emerging in relation to what you can do with your images.

One of the latest and most popular of these techniques is HDR, or 'High Dynamic Range', processing, with nearly a quarter of a million images on image-sharing site Flickr possessing the tag 'HDR', and top-notch examples of the technique creeping more and more into the modern photographer's repertoire.

As with most new techniques HDR can seem intimidating at first with the initial steps to creating top-quality HDR images being the hardest. However, WDC is here to help make these steps easier...

So what exactly is HDR? And how can you use it to get more from your digital photography? WDC investigates...

As can be seen by the various examples on these pages and the plethora of images creeping into the photographic community, HDR is an unarguably eye-catching technique. However, there is more than just an artistic purpose to the technique: it can be used as a practical tool to improve your photography.

As previously mentioned, the HDR technique allows the photographer to display the full dynamic range of an image, allowing detail otherwise lost in shadows and highlights to be revealed. The technique also allows a wider range of tonal details that, while visible to the eye, are unable to be captured through a single exposed image which is likely to have blown out highlights and murky shadows.

The practical implications of the HDR technique are best illustrated by the following example. Imagine taking a photo from the inside of a room and attempting to get both an accurate representation of both the room and, say, the fantastic view out of the window despite difficult lighting.

Capturing such a scene using a single exposure would be almost impossible due to the huge difference in brightness levels between the inside of the room and the sunny outside. Much the same would be the case if you were shooting shadowy architecture, for example.

The beauty of HDR photography is that such a problem is easily surmounted due to the ability to blend and tone map several exposures of the same shot in which both the shadows and the highlights have been exposed correctly. In the instance of the room for example, you can maintain the details of the interior while also showing the view through the windows.

> The HDR processing technique offers something for everyone

Art as well as Craft

As with other photographic techniques, there are also artistic implications and capabilities involved within HDR processing. An editing suite such as Photoshop presents the photographer a range of filters with which they can completely transform their images. The results can be impressive and, if used correctly, filters can enhance the quality of an image exponentially. It is worth noting though that just because there are a lot of filters on offer, it doesn't mean you have to use them all, and to their fullest capability. Many a fantastic photograph has been spoiled by overuse of image adjustments.

This is the same with HDR in so far as there is a broad range of tweaks and tools on offer in post-production, and their use often produces surreal and artistic results to some people's liking yet to the discontent of others. The key is to gain an understanding of each individual tone-mapping facet and then to learn how you can use it to most accurately gain the effect you're looking to achieve. If you don't have an understanding of each facet, then you'll struggle to find a good use for the technique.

When you come to deciding exactly the kind of effect that you want to have with your image, whether it be an adaptation of a difficult dynamic range in a shot, the urge to recreate the drama of a storm or just a new approach to portraiture, the HDR technique offers something for everyone.

ALL IMAGES: PAUL NUTTALL

What Digital Camera INVESTIGATES

PAUL EXPLAINS

The nitty gritty of HDR

What is HDR?

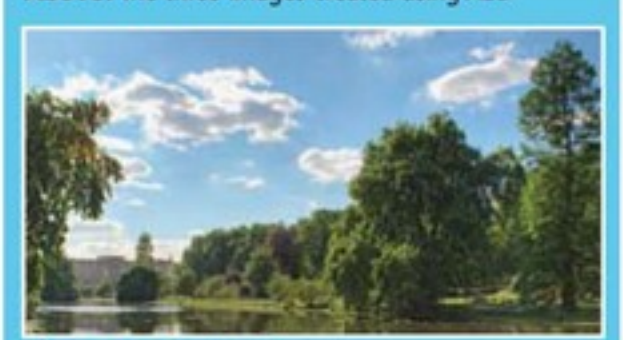
Dynamic range is defined as the ratio between the brightest and the darkest areas of a scene. Therefore, when referring to a 'high' dynamic range, we are concerned with the ability to display a wider range of bright and dark areas than is possible in standard digital photography, or a limited dynamic range image. In essence, it is the ability to display details in shadows and highlights otherwise lost in a conventional image.

The process of the High Dynamic Range imaging technique manages to overcome the restrictions of the limited dynamic range of conventional digital cameras by utilising both exposure blending and tone-mapping techniques in tandem, using either recent versions of Photoshop CS or specialist software packages.

...it is the ability to display details otherwise lost...

The idea is to take several images of the same subject at different exposures, either utilising AEB (automatic exposure bracketing) or manually, and then merge them together. The results are often striking, yet the technique is beset on all sides with potential problems in production, making it a technique that takes a lot of practice to perfect. The number of different exposures needed can vary, so don't be afraid to experiment when shooting.

Above: The three images created using AEB



Above: The final result

HDR ON THE WEB

Galleries and web-resources to aid your HDR

www.flickr.com/groups/hdr/
With a pool of nearly 100,000 HDR images from a member base of some 13,000 Flickr'ites, this group provides a great place to both share image for advice and to learn from others. A must visit.

www.beforethecoffee.wordpress.com/tag/hdr/
Beforethecoffee is a blog run by photographer Ferrell McCollough, showcasing a range of different photography techniques, with a broad range of HDR examples alongside some top tutorials and tips.

www.stuckincustoms.com/
Another excellent HDR-based website demonstrating the creative possibilities along with the practical implications of HDR processing, which attracts over three million views every month!

When to use it?

The HDR technique can be applied to a whole host of settings and subjects. However, there are several genres to which the technique lends itself in particular...

Landscapes (Right)

One of the most popular subjects for the HDR post-processing treatment is Landscapes. The ability to handle the dynamic data throughout a landscape shot is a huge benefit when shooting a scene where the sky and foreground necessitate different exposures. In the shot to the right, for example, detail on the far mountains and highlights on the clouds would have been lost without accurate HDR processing. For excellent results, try to get out there when either the sun is setting or there's a storm brewing!

Architecture (Left middle)

Managing to reveal both the fine highlights and what lurks in the crevices of buildings is a real benefit of the technique, as is the effect on subtle lighting. Next time you're at church on a Sunday or pop out for a pint, consider taking your tripod and bracketing a few images.

Portrait/Still life (Right middle)

While portraiture and still life images may not be the most conventional of subjects for an HDR treatment, the effect can be remarkable. Subjects shot in difficult or moody lighting often create the best results.

Interiors (Below)

Gaining the correct exposure for both the interior and the exterior of a room is nigh on impossible without a sophisticated lighting set-up yet is easily achieved with HDR. Try wandering around some historic buildings or maybe even just try the technique in your own front room!

IMAGE: JEFF CLOW (WWW.FLICKR.COM/PHOTOS/JEFFCLOW)

IMAGE: NICOLA DA PISAPIA (WWW.FLICKR.COM/PHOTOS/VESUVIANO)

IMAGE: MARCO VENTURA (WWW.FLICKR.COM/PHOTOS/SCALABIT)

IMAGE: CHRISTIAN VAN FLETEREN (WWW.FLICKR.COM/PHOTOS/CVANFLETERAN)

While HDR might present you with a whole new range of post-production challenges and tools for image manipulation, it is important to remember that the fundamentals of photography are still as important as ever. After all, while HDR has the ability to transform a good picture into an excellent one, it isn't a miracle cure for a bad picture, though it is often misused as such, with horrific consequences! Alongside the reminder to consider the basics of photography, there are a few helpful things to bear in mind.

Composition and the 'basics'

One of the most important ingredients of a good picture is composition, and this is also true of HDR images. Try to think of the areas that are going to be emphasised that may previously have been hidden or overlooked, such as the shadowy areas in architecture. Also, don't be afraid to include more of a cloudy sky in landscape images for example, as tone mapping will bring out the clouds to such an extent that they may subsequently become an unexpected and eye-pleasing focal point of the image.

Low and wide-angle shots can also benefit greatly from HDR processing. Much the same as with conventional shooting, always look for a perspective beyond the norm to transform your images.

Bracketing and data maximising

While it is possible to create a type of HDR image from a single Raw file, to gain the true HDR with minimal noise, it is best to shoot multiple exposures using the AEB or bracketing function built into most cameras, or to simply shoot a range of exposures manually in conjunction with a tripod. The reasoning behind AEB functions is to expose one image correctly and then over- and underexpose two more by a selected number of stops. In doing so, you gain the maximum amount of dynamic data from your subject, and will in turn have more image data to play with at the processing stage.

> Don't be afraid to experiment with the number of exposures

As shooting HDR is concerned with keeping and displaying as much image information as possible, it is a good idea to shoot the composite exposures in Raw before converting them to TIFFs. Much the same as including several bracketed exposures, the uncompressed Raw file will contain more image information and will benefit your final image. Whilst it may result in a slightly longer workflow due to demands upon the post-processing capabilities of your computer, the end results will be more than worthwhile.

There is a lot of debate as to just how many exposures you need to combine in your finished image, with numbers of composite shot from 2 to 16 all producing fantastic shots. However, the general consensus is that in areas of higher contrast you'll need a higher number of exposures, and vice versa. Most cameras have the ability to capture at least three images in AEB mode, and for the majority of scenes that'll be enough to capture the full dynamic range. It's often an idea to experiment with the number of exposures and the range of ±EV values and see what suits.

What Digital Camera INVESTIGATES READERS' HDR TIPS

WDC readers share their top HDR tips

Nicola De Pisapia

- Exposure stops of ±2 EV produce a better HDR than a single Raw file.
- With the three shots, a tripod and remote release are essential
- Photomatix is the best software for fast HDR and tone mapping, but I find that Photoshop is necessary to make the final adjustments such as Curves, Color Balance etc.
- For night-time HDR, try and make sure any light-source is neutral otherwise its colour will saturate considerably.
- Develop an 'eye' for HDR! Some lighting conditions produce much more interesting results than others. Experience will develop your instinct.

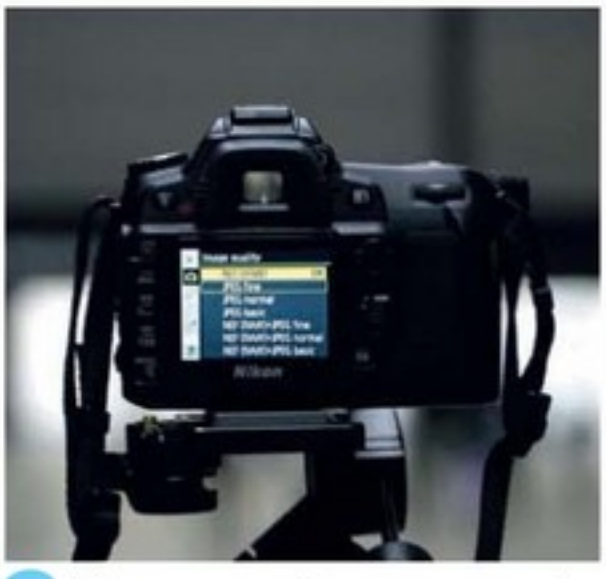
Jeff Clow

- Take lots of photos using AEB. I space my exposures at -2.0, correct, and + 2.0 with three shots, or -2.0, -1.0, correct, + 1.0 and +2.0 with five shots.
- Use a tripod or image stabilization, and use continuous shooting mode to minimise any subject movement.
- Use a good blending tool like Photomatix or Photoshop CS3 but turn down the sliders so the image remains realistic instead of becoming flat or cartoon-like.
- Try tweaking the final image with a warming filter from a photo-editing program. Often this can really help pump up the nuances of light and colour.

How to shoot an HDR image

There are many ways by which you can obtain good Raw matierial for HDR processing. Here are a few top tips...

1 Minimising camera shake and movement is essential when looking to get a crystal-clear HDR image. Set up your camera on a sturdy tripod and shoot either bracketed images or manually, using a remote, cable release or the self-timer.



2 Where camera settings are concerned, try to shoot in Raw at all times. This will allow you to both perform any minor tweaks needed at a later date and will also capture the maximum amount of image data for your final image.

3 To determine what range of exposures to use, set the camera to auto and meter for both the lightest and the darkest areas of the proposed shot, then set the camera to the middle of the two and shoot the required images in either AEB or manually.

Create an HDR image with Photomatix

So you've followed our tips and got your fantastic, and literal, Raw material together poised for the HDR treatment. Now it's time to put your masterpiece together! Here goes...

1 If you've taken your images in Raw, the first step is to get them converted into images to blend and map. Open the files up in a Raw processor, such as Adobe Camera Raw, and save them as either TIFF or JPEGs. TIFFs are preferable if you have the space and the processing capabilities, owing to the extra image data they store.

2 Open up your chosen HDR software. For this tutorial, I'll be using Photomatix as it is commonly believed to be the most capable HDR processing software. Once the software has loaded, the first step towards generating an image is just two clicks away. Select HDR from the toolbar, and then click Generate on the drop-down menu.

3 Now select your range of bracketed exposures by browsing the folder in which they are saved and click 'OK'. You'll be taken to an 'Alignment and Curve Options' window. Now check 'Assume Standard Tone Curve' and 'Align Source Images'. Once that's done, simply click 'OK' to start the HDR generating process rolling!

WIN! A COPY OF PHOTOMATIX

Get your hands on the software worth over £50!

As mentioned throughout the article, there are several different methods and various pieces of software with which you can create your HDR masterpiece. However, one of the simplest and most accessible pieces is Photomatix from HDRsoft, and we've got two copies to give away to two lucky WDC readers. Simply e-mail your name and address to 'WDC@ipcmedia.com' by Friday 28th September to enter the draw. Winners will be selected at random.

GUIDE TO TONE MAPPING

A lowdown on the key controls in Photomatix

Strength
Controls overall contrast enhancements, with 100 being the maximum amount

Colour Saturation
Much the same as adapting the saturation on Photoshop, and probably best left until after the HDR production

Micro Contrast
Controls how pronounced the smaller areas and details are

Light Smoothing
One of the main tools in increasing the subtlety of the HDR image, with a higher value reducing 'artistic' effects such as halos

Luminosity
Another tool for controlling shadow details and brightening of the image, with a high value boosting shadow details and a lower value increasing a more natural look

Micro Smoothing
A useful tool for cleaning up the overall look of the image, such as how noisy it is, for example, by smoothing out local detail enhancement

White/Black Clipping
A great tool for subtle lightening and darkening of the image, with the white clipping adjusting highlight contrast and the black clipping adjusting shadow contrast

HDR SOFTWARE

Three tools to have you HDR-ing in no time

Photomatix
Free to try, $99 to download the full version
www.hdrsoft.com
Photomatix is generally considered to be the most capable introduction to HDR processing and is available for a full free trial, with only the restriction of a few watermarks on finalised images.

Photoshop CS3 *£570*
www.adobe.com/uk
Photoshop is fantastic to use as a separate manipulation tool for both pre- and post-HDR creation, with both Camera Raw and standard Photoshop image tools. However, it also has a slightly more basic option to convert to HDR.

FDR Tools
Free (Basic)
£29 (advanced)
www.fdrtools.com
One of the cheaper options in HDR development, FDR tools (Full Dynamic Range) is praised in the HDR community and offers a broad range of tweaks and creation tools for the development of HDR images.

4 This step is where the magic really happens. The image you see in this window will be pretty horrible looking, so we'll have to start tone mapping and playing with all of the settings described in the 'tone mapping box'. Once happy with the basic HDR overlook of the image, click 'OK' and then save the image as a .TIFF file.

5 Open up your HDR processed image in Photoshop and complete the finishing touches, such as manipulation of curves and levels as you would a normal image, to create your HDR masterpiece. These finishing touches are important to an HDR image, and can really set the image off. Have a play and see what suits the scene.

READER OFFER 15% OFF!

Save money with WDC's reader offer

If you don't manage to get your hands on a copy of Photomatix through our competition, don't fret! The lovely people at HDRsoft have provdied us with a discount code providing 15% off the software. Simply visit www.hdrsoft.com and enter the code 'WDCSEPTEMBER' to claim your discount. The offer is valid until 7th November, so be quick!

HDR IN PHOTOSHOP CS 2

Achieve HDR results without the specialist software!

For those of you who already have Photoshop CS2 or CS3, it isn't essential for you to indulge in a specialist item of HDR software quite yet; Photoshop allows you to achieve excellent results with its 'Merge to HDR' feature

1. You can find the 'Merge to HDR' option by clicking on **File > Automate > Merge to HDR**. You'll then be required to select the images you're looking to merge before clicking OK.

2. The next window to appear is the HDR viewing window. This window gives you the option to view the amount of dynamic range introduced from each exposure, and allows you to delete any as desired. When done, click 'OK'.

3. The image will now be in 32-bit format. To edit the image convert it down to 16-bit, by clicking on **Image > Mode > 16-bit**. In doing so, you will be presented with four choices of HDR conversion:

Exposure and Gamma – This will allow you to toggle the brightness and contrast of the HDR image, but subtle tweaks are best

Highlight Compression – An automatic tool that compresses the luminance values to fall into the 16-bit image file, with no toggling needed due to it being automatic

Equalize Histogram – Another automatic tool that compresses the dynamic range of the HDR yet preserves contrast

Local Adaptation – This option adjusts the tonality of the HDR by calculating areas of brightness and correcting as necessary.

These are all quite intricate conversion options, so it's best to just see which one suits your image through practising. Once finished, click OK and complete final adjustments in Photoshop.

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TRIED & TESTED

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P59 Group Test
"£150 compacts"

P66 Sony W200
"....Sexy 12MP model"

DSLR GROUP TEST p40

Nikon's D80, Canon's 30D and Pentax's K10D get thrown into the ring

AT A GLANCE

Latest Tests...

From budget compact options stylish backpacks, see how our selection of this month's hottest products did under the WDC test

DSLR Group Test	p40
Printing Services – Group Test	p51
£150 compacts – Group Test	p59
Canon S5 IS	p64
Sanyo VPC-HD2	p65
Olympus mju 750	p65
Sony W200	p66
Nikon LII	p66
Canon Pixma 9500	p67
Crumpler Pretty Boy Backpack	p68
Transcend SATA Hard Drive	p68
Imagenomic Portraiture	p69
National Geographic Bag	p69

Our Awards
Products that score **85%** and over get a WDC Recommended badge, while those products which score **90%** and over get a WDC Gold Award badge.

What Digital Camera RECOMMENDED
What Digital Camera GOLD AWARD

GROUP TEST

Which of these DSLRs offers the most?

DSLR Shoot Out

If you're looking to upgrade your entry-level DSLR, the leading manufacturers all have something to offer. WDC takes a look at a trio of middleweight contenders

Tested by Chris Gatcum

It doesn't matter where you start your photographic 'career' – once the snapping bug has bitten you'll find yourself looking to expand and upgrade your kit to match your skills and ambitions. Nowhere is this more evident than with the enthusiast DSLR owner, who's most likely to expand the contents of their kit bag by adding lenses, filters and other accessories as time goes by.

Inevitably you're also likely to outgrow the actual camera you use, and where you might have once been happy with your entry-level DSLR, you'll find yourself hankering after something a little more robust, a little more refined, and – when all is said and done – something a little bit 'better'.

The good news is that most manufacturers offer a definite upgrade route, starting with scene-mode-heavy, entry-level fare for the novice and moving up to slightly more sophisticated, slightly more demanding models for the more-experienced photo enthusiast.

On trial this month are three such mid-range models from Canon, Nikon and Pentax – the EOS 30D, D80 and K10D, respectively. Each of these has something to offer the photographer looking for an upgrade, but they're also ideal for photographers converting from 35mmm film SLRs who already know 'the basics', and for the more affluent newcomer looking for a long-term DSLR solution. Let's take a look at how they line up.

FEATURES

All three cameras boast some top-end features; which ones are most important for you?

Left The hotshoe accepts Canon Speedlite compatible flashguns and uses E-TTL II flash control for wired and wireless flash
Right Camera top-plate settings such as shutter speeds are changed using a single command dial

Left The Nikon SB and compatible i-TTL flash units can be controlled either wirelessly or directly via the hotshoe
Right Nikon has added a front and rear command dial for easy changing of the shutter speed and aperture, among other functions

CANON EOS 30D

As we went to press, Canon announced the EOS 40D and the discontinuation of this model, so keep an eye out for end-of-line special offers. Its 8.2MP CMOS sensor produces images up to 3504x2336 pixels, and while this might not be the double-figure resolution offered by the other cameras seen here, there's not that much difference when it comes to 300dpi print sizes.

Raw, JPEG and simultaneous Raw/JPEG capture is possible (with files stored on CompactFlash media) and up to 30 Fine JPEG or 11 Raw frames can be recorded in succession at a 5fps continuous shooting rate. Additionally, a 9-point AF system helps ensure the focus keeps up with the action.

Five common scene modes and a fully automatic setting augment the PASM shooting modes, while shutter speeds extending from 30-1/8000sec (plus Bulb) cover all eventualities. The metering system is equally well rounded, with Canon's proven 35-zone evaluative, centre-weighted and partial metering patterns joined by a 3.5% spot metering option. Throw in a sensitivity setting ranging from ISO 100-1600, which can be extended to ISO 3200 via the custom functions and the only thing that can really describe the EOS 30D as 'lacking' is any form of anti-shake or anti-dust system, though Canon's IS lenses can be used at longer shutter speeds if you have the extra cash.

NIKON D80

As a replacement for the D70 (and D70s), the D80 perfectly bridges the gap between Nikon's entry-level and high-end DSLR models. Taking its lead from the D200, the D80 uses a 10.2-megapixel DX-format CCD sensor to deliver Raw or JPEG files (or both simultaneously) up to 3872x2592 pixels in size and also borrows the D200's Multi-CAM 1000 11-point AF system and exposure algorithms. These algorithms control the 420-segment 3D Colour Matrix Metering II exposure meter, which also provides a variable centre-weighted metering pattern and a precise 2.5% spot meter for added accuracy.

The seasoned photographer has the familiar PASM quartet of shooting modes on tap, and there are seven Digital Vari-program (scene) modes for the less-experienced user. Backing these up is a sensitivity range covering ISO 100-1600 that – like the Canon EOS 30D – can be extended to give an ISO 3200 equivalent. Shutter speeds range from 30-1/4000sec with the camera delivering up to six Raw or 23 Large Fine JPEG files to your SD media at a rate of three frames per second.

However, as is the case in the 30D, there's no dust-reduction or anti-shake built into the camera's body, leaving you to invest in Nikon's premium priced Vibration Reduction (VR) lenses and a cleaning kit if either of these is a concern.

Left Although it has wireless and hotshoe flash, the Pentax P2 adaptor is needed to use X-sync based flash units
Right Like the Nikon, the K10D utilises a front and rear command dial system for fingertip control of common camera settings

PENTAX K10D

The Pentax K10D caused a stir when it burst onto the DSLR scene earlier this year thanks to its high build quality and low price tag – 'think Nikon D200 at a D80 price' was one Pentax representative's description. In terms of features, the K10D certainly holds its own among high-end cameras, with a 10.2MP CCD and the option to record either Pentax .PEF Raw files, or the Adobe .DNG Raw format for instant integration in a Photoshop workflow. Both of these can be recorded either in isolation or in conjunction with JPEG files, and, of course, JPEG-only shooting is also possible.

Like the D80, the K10D will shuffle through three frames per second, maintaining this rate across ten Raw frames or until your SD or SDHC card is full if you choose Fine JPEGs.

Pentax's 11-point SAFOX VIII AF system takes care of focusing, while 16-segment metering, centre-weighted and spot options deal with exposures.

The K10D also has some quite advanced features up its digital sleeves, including two new shooting modes – Sensitivity Priority and Aperture/Shutter Priority – which make the ISO a key control in exposure metering. In addition, the K10D is the only one of this trio to offer both anti-shake and anti-dust features thanks to its electro-magnet mounted CCD.

LANDSCAPES

These examples below show how each camera fared with landscapes

CANON EOS 30D
At the lower ISO settings the EOS 30D delivers noise-free images up to (and including) ISO 400. However, the noise reduction means you may end up with slightly soft images, which isn't ideal for the landscape photographer. It also injects a little extra warmth into images when you rely on the automatic white balance, often delivering slightly pink results.

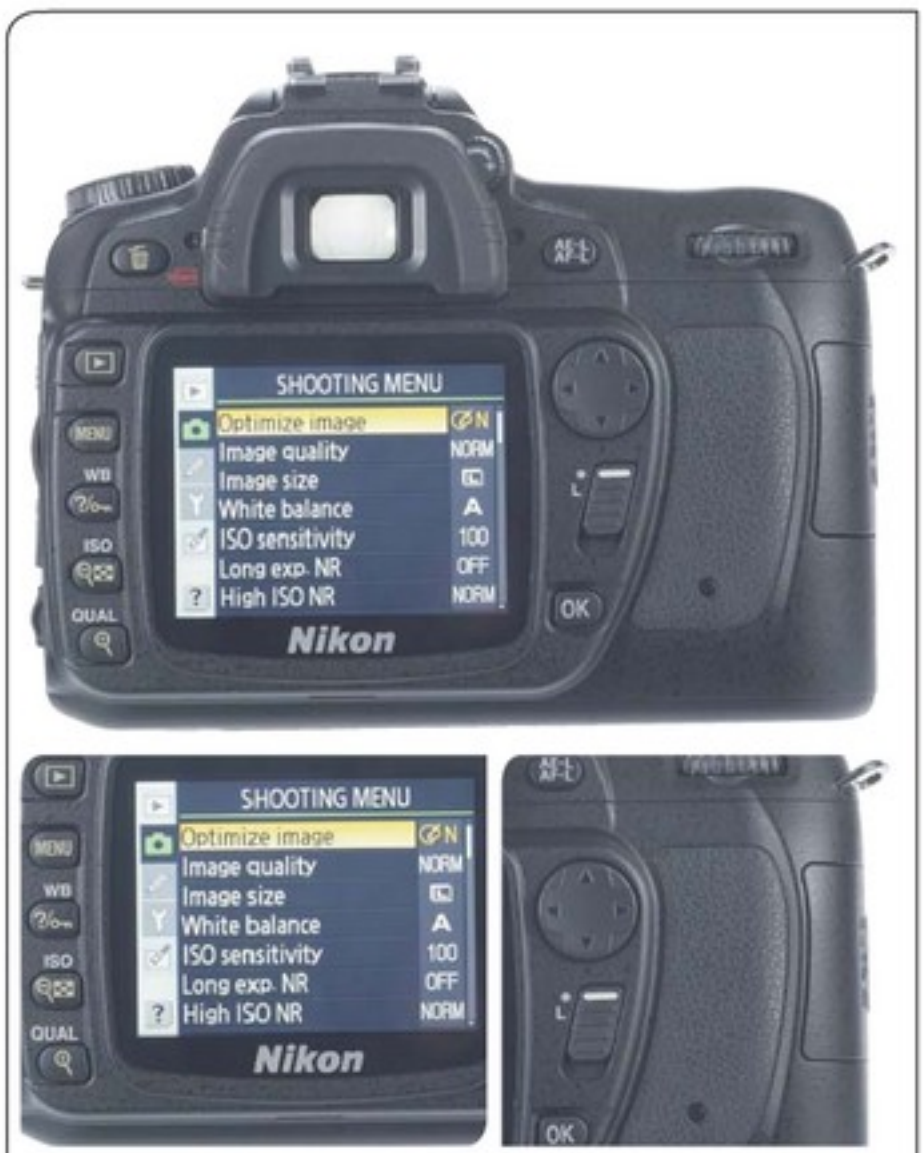
NIKON D80
Several on-board noise-reduction options allow you to tailor the noise/sharpness ratio, although noise reduction isn't necessary at ISO 100-200. The automatic white balance can add the slightest yellow bias to images on occasion, although it's nothing serious and is resolved very easily. A little work may be needed in the 'Natural' colour setting, as colours are a tad muted with slightly low contrast and saturation.

PENTAX K10D
The 16-segment metering is easily fooled into underexposure by the slightest highlight area, while the auto white balance can be a little cool. At first glance, these combine to give rather drab images but with a few adjustments to the levels and curves in your editing software, you'll find the images spring back to life to give a slight edge over its rivals in terms of sharpness, noise and detail.

HANDLING

You wouldn't buy a DLSR without handling it yourself: here are the differences to start you off

Left The Canon 2.5in LCD screen offers 230,000 pixels and the menu is simple to navigate
Right Canon uses a scroll wheel for menu navigation, and this also operates the aperture in Manual mode as well as other features such as bracketing. A central 'set' button allows selection of menu items



Left The Nikon D80 also uses a 2.5in screen with 230,000 pixels and has a very user-friendly interface for the menu
Right Rather than a scroll wheel, the Nikon uses a rocking D-pad to navigate the menu, with a separate OK button to confirm selections. This is also used to select AF points

CANON EOS 30D

When it was launched in early 2006, the EOS 30D commanded a hefty £1200 price tag. Although the price has dropped quite dramatically since then, that initial figure certainly reflects the build of the camera, as its rugged, rubberised finish and overall weight make it feel like it will stand the test of time. Rubber socket covers offer a level of weatherproofing for added durability, and while not quite as 'sealed' as the Pentax K10D it makes the D80 feel decidedly 'plastic' by comparison.

The EOS 30D also offers a top-end operating speed, with a near-instant start up, a blistering frame rate and processing that combine to allow you to shoot, store and display an image within a second. Capable of five frames per second across 30 frames, the 30D never keeps you waiting in general use, and despite being the elder statesman of this trio we've chosen to group test, it is still the class-leader in this respect.

You might find a slight delay when you enter the menu system though, as the 30D uses a single, colour-coded list for all its options. There's a 'jump' option to take you to the next section if you know where your setting lies, but it can be a lengthy trawl through the options if you don't.

NIKON D80

The D80 is laid out in the familiar Nikon style, with control wheels front and aft for fuss-free aperture and shutter speed adjustment. However, compared to the other two models in this group, there's no doubt the D80 feels a bit of a 'lightweight' – it's over 100g lighter than the others, which is largely down to its plastic exterior.

There are no complaints about the way it handles though, with a near-instant start-up time allowing you to take a shot almost immediately. Nikon quotes a 0.18sec start-up time and I'm not going to argue. The D80 doesn't wait around when it comes to storing images to your SD media either, with a 12.8MB Raw file taking roughly four seconds to clear the buffer and large, 5MB JPEGs about half that time.

Other handling improvements include the use of the Multi-CAM 1000 AF system, handed down from the company's D200 model. As we'd expect from a high-end AF system, it's both fast and responsive, with the 11 AF points proving especially beneficial when it comes to targeting small areas in a scene or tracking moving subjects. Throw in an intuitive menu system that features Nikon's 'retouch' option for customising your JPEGs, and the D80 doesn't disappoint, although it's not the most robust in this group.

Left Pentax has matched the size of the 30D and D80 LCD monitors, but with slightly lower resolution of 210,000 pixels
Right The K10D's navigational control is a combination of outer scroll wheel and inner D-pad with a centrally placed 'OK' button. The outer wheel controls AF point selection

PENTAX K10D

With its tough build, the K10D sets the precedent for what we should expect from a mid-range camera. A heavily rubberised exterior and weatherproof seals around the various access flaps give it the feel of Nikon's D200 or Canon's EOS 5D, while its chunky construction also makes it feel much more like a 'pro' camera.

The control layout is also well thought out, with the 'Fn' (Function) button taking you straight to key shooting options, including ISO and white balance, and a one-touch 'Raw' button on the front allowing you to quickly opt to record a Raw file when the situation warrants it.

Additional 'novelties' – which are no less useful – include a white balance check that lets you preview your shot and adjust the white balance 'live' on the LCD screen, and in-camera Raw processing that lets you quickly create optimised JPEGs.

This is particularly useful if you want to shoot Raw 'master' files, but print a select few direct from the memory card, as you can take control of the JPEG processing after the event, unlike when shooting Raw and JPEG simultaneously.

There are no complaints about the AF system either, with Pentax's SAFOX VIII providing precise and nippy focusing, which only delivers the slightest hesitation in low-light situations.

PORTRAITS

We compared the three models to see how they recorded skin tones

NIKON D80

Although it lacks a PC sync socket, the D80 offers both wired and wireless control over Nikon SB flashguns, or you can mount one in the hotshoe. In all cases, Nikon's reliable i-TTL control delivers consistently well-exposed images. Skin tones are good, and with a good lens the D80 produces pin-sharp results. However, the results can be a little too sharp at the default settings – especially if you want a slightly soft, 'romantic' feel to your portrait. Reducing the level of in-camera sharpening (or turning it off altogether) is the simple solution.

CANON EOS 30D

Thanks to a hotshoe that provides E-TTL II control (both wired and wireless) over the company's Speedlite flashes and a flash sync (PC) socket that lets you use it with studio lighting, the EOS 30D is perfect for portraiture.

It's notable that this is the only camera in the group to have a PC socket, so it's ideal for studio work, especially given the results. Smooth tonal gradations and a wide range of colour controls help you get the skin tones you're after, while a lack of noise ensures clean results, even when you crank up the ISO.

PENTAX K10D

Wireless flash control was one of the main differences between the Pentax K10D and Samsung GX10, but you need the latest flash for full functionality and control. It's also worth investing in the Pentax P2 hotshoe adaptor if you want to plug in studio flash, as some generic adaptors have issues with the signal polarity and will refuse to trigger the flash.

However, overcome the flash issues and the K10D produces excellent portraits. You have to watch your histogram to avoid exposure issues, and also pay attention to the white balance, but if everything comes together the results are great.

IMAGE QUALITY

They may have great spec but how do they stack up when it comes to the most important thing of all?

The CMOS sensor in the 30D produces smooth tones and noise-free images, but the noise reduction can sometimes soften the images a tad

The metering system of the D80 is impressive with perfect, consistent exposures time after time

CANON EOS 30D

In many ways, the Canon EOS 30D is a great camera, especially when it comes to its handling speed and build. It is also capable of making consistently accurate exposures, with a white balance system that can inject a slight warmth, sometimes serving to make your pictures a little more appealing.

The images are also largely noise-free – even at the highest ISO settings – thanks to Canon's noise-reduction algorithms. While slight luminosity noise appears at ISO 1600 when images are enlarged to an A4 print size, shooting at slower speeds results in incredibly smooth results. However, this is something of a double-edged sword, as, while images are smooth, the aggressive noise-reduction processing softens the images, taking the edge off areas of fine detail. Obviously you can counter this by sharpening your images in your image-editing software, but in doing so you'll then start to bring back the luminance noise.

This situation won't be helped if you decide to save money by getting the camera with a 'budget' lens to start with, so the advice with the 30D is simple – if you want to get the best out of it, you need to get a good lens.

NIKON D80

In terms of noise – and noise control – the D80 excels, delivering noise-free results up to ISO 400, and acceptable A4 prints up to ISO 1600. It's slightly noisier than the EOS 30D (which is to be expected given the smaller pixels on the D80's 10MP sensor), but at the same time it's decidedly sharper too. It's also possible to tailor the amount of in-camera noise reduction that takes place – setting the noise reduction to 'low' works well for detailed images where sharpness is the primary consideration.

The only way of describing the D80's metering system is 'bombproof'. Whether I've been shooting indoors in low/mixed lighting conditions, or outside in the summer sun, it hasn't faltered at any point. Even when faced with a large expanse of sky, or strong highlight areas, it manages – without intervention – to produce an acceptable exposure. Sure, there are times when you might want to tweak it by ±1/2 a stop, but these occasions are relatively few and far between. The white balance is also conducive for getting 'print-ready' images from the camera and while images might be a touch yellow at times, only the most critical eye would notice it.

It sometimes requires a bit of user effort to get the best exposure, but the K10D retains highlight details better than the rest

PENTAX K10D

Trying to assess the image quality of the K10D largely depends on what you expect from the camera to start with. If you're looking for print-ready files that can go straight from your memory card to your printer or high street lab then you're likely to be quite disappointed. The reason for this is that the 16-segment metering and automatic white balance seem to conspire to make things slightly tricky. Include a highlight in the scene you're photographing and the meter will immediately underexpose the image, producing a low-contrast, rather uninspiring result.

However, although it's prone to underexposure, the K10D retains highlight detail better than the other two, and it's far easier to draw out the shadow detail in an image too. So, if you're willing to work a little – ideally on Raw files – you'll find the K10D actually delivers the best tonal range.

It also displays low levels of noise up to ISO 800 – again marginally better than the D80 – and doesn't suffer from the loss of edge sharpness like the EOS 30D does. At ISO 1600 things aren't quite as pleasant, and if you need to correct the exposure to lighten the image this will also exaggerate the noise.

LOW LIGHT

How do the three cameras cope in adverse lighting conditions?

CANON EOS 30D

Using the 30D in low-light conditions is a positive experience, thanks to the combination of the best low-light AF performance in this group and lack of noise – there's no trace of chroma (colour) noise, even at ISO 1600. There's slight luminosity texture, but it's unobtrusive. On the downside, the noise reduction algorithms take the edge off images somewhat.

NIKON D80

To use the D80 in low light, you need to crank up the ISO sensitivity, as there's no image stabilisation unless you invest in VR lenses. However, the D80 produces images that are largely noise free and up to ISO 800 you can happily make A4 prints. At ISO 1600, there's some chroma and luminosity noise, but neither is overly aggressive. Using the 'extended' ISO 3200 setting produces coloured blotches and an overall softness, limiting print sizes.

PENTAX K10D

For low-light photography the K10D is by far the most suitable camera in this group. Although it doesn't have an 'extended' ISO 3200 equivalent, it does have Pentax's Shake Reduction technology. The moving sensor gives a minimum two-stop advantage which means you can either use a lower ISO setting or get away with shooting at a slower shutter speed. As a result, the images are sharper than the others as there's no camera shake.

AT A GLANCE

Overview

The specifications compared and our final verdict – you'll find it all here

	Canon EOS 30D	Nikon D80	Pentax K10D
MANUFACTURER	Canon	Nikon	Pentax
MODEL	EOS 30D	D80	K10D
STREET PRICE	£650	£650	£550
SENSOR	22.5x15mm CMOS sensor with 8.2 million effective pixels	23.6x15.8mm CCD sensor with 10.2 million effective pixels	23.5x15.7mm CCD sensor with 10.2 million effective pixels
REC FORMAT	Raw, JPEG, Raw+JPEG	Raw, JPEG, Raw+JPEG	Raw (PEF / DNG), JPEG, Raw+JPEG
MAX IMAGE SIZE	3504 x 2336 pixels	3872 x 2592 pixels	3872 x 2592 pixels
MAX PRINT SIZE	11.5 x 8in @ 300ppi	13 x 8.5in @ 300ppi	13 x 8.5in @ 300ppi
LENS MOUNT	Canon EF	Nikon F	Pentax KAF 2
MAGNIFICATION	1.6x	1.5x	1.5x
SHUTTER SPEEDS	30-1/8000sec + Bulb	30-1/4000sec + Bulb	30-1/4000sec + Bulb
ISO	ISO 100-1600, extendable to ISO 3200	100-1600, expandable to ISO 3200	100-1600
EXP MODES	Auto, P, A, S, M, 5 Scene	P, A, S, M, 7 Vari-Program modes	Auto, P, A, S, M, Sensitivity Priority
METERING	35-zone evaluative, Centre weighted, Partial (9%), Spot (3.5%)	420-segment 3D Colour Matrix Metering II, Centre weighted, Spot (3.5mm / 2.5%)	16-segment evaluative, Centre weighted, Spot
WHITE BALANCE	Auto, Manual, 6 presets, Kelvin	Auto, Manual, 6 presets, Kelvin	Auto, Manual, 6 presets, Kelvin
COLOUR MODES	sRGB / AdobeRGB	sRGB / AdobeRGB	sRGB / AdobeRGB
FLASH	Built in, GN13m@ISO 100 Hotshoe	Built in, GN13m@ISO 100 Hotshoe	Built in, GN11m@ISO 100 Hotshoe
FLASH SYNC	1/250sec	1/200sec	1/180 sec
SYNC SOCKET	Yes	No	No
DRIVE MODES	Single, Continuous (max. 5fps)	Single, Continuous (max. 3fps)	Single, Continuous (max. 3fps)
FOCUS	9 AF points with manual or automatic seltion	11 AF points with manual or automatic selection	11 AF points with manual or automatic selection
VIEWFINDER	95% coverage	95% coverage	95% coverage
MONITOR	2.5in LCD with 230,000 pixels	2.5in LCD with 230,000 pixels	2.5in LCD with 210,000 pixels
CONNECTION	USB 2.0 Hi Speed	USB 2.0 Hi Speed	USB 2.0 Hi Speed
POWER	Li-Ion, Optional AC Adaptor	Li-Ion, Optional AC Adaptor	Li-Ion, Optional AC Adaptor
STORAGE	CompactFlash Type I/II	SD / SDHC	SD / SDHC
DIMENSIONS	144 x 101 x 74mm	132 x 103 x 77mm	141.5 x 101 x 70mm
WEIGHT	700g (without battery/card)	585g (without battery/card)	710g (without battery/card)

AND FINALLY

Our Verdict

It's been about 18 months since the Canon EOS 30D was launched, but as this test has shown, newer is not necessarily better. Each of these cameras has its own particular strengths – and weaknesses – which makes it very difficult to pick an overall winner.

Starting with the 30D I'm still incredibly impressed by its operating speed – especially the AF system in low-light conditions and the near-instant file writing. If speed is the key then the 30D is top of the group and also has the best build quality. However, the slightly mushy images are a little less desirable, and need careful processing.

By comparison, Nikon's D80 lacks the build quality and speed of the 30D and doesn't have the feature-rich specification of the Pentax K10D, but it makes up for these by doing everything well. Reliable exposure metering and white balance systems ensure that images come out of the camera print-ready, while the processing delivers first-rate images that are neither too noisy nor too soft.

The third – and newest – model in this group is the Pentax K10D, the only one to feature both anti-dust and anti-shake systems, with the latter being very useful and effective, especially in low light. Like the 30D it's also well made and has the added benefit of weatherproof seals. However, the metering and white balance demand much more work from the photographer to get the best from the camera. If you're willing to do that, image quality is superior to the 30D and, arguably better than the D80's0.

Ultimately though, the D80 gets my final nod. It may not be the 'heaviest duty' or best specified here, but when it comes to getting great results with minimum fuss, it has the edge.

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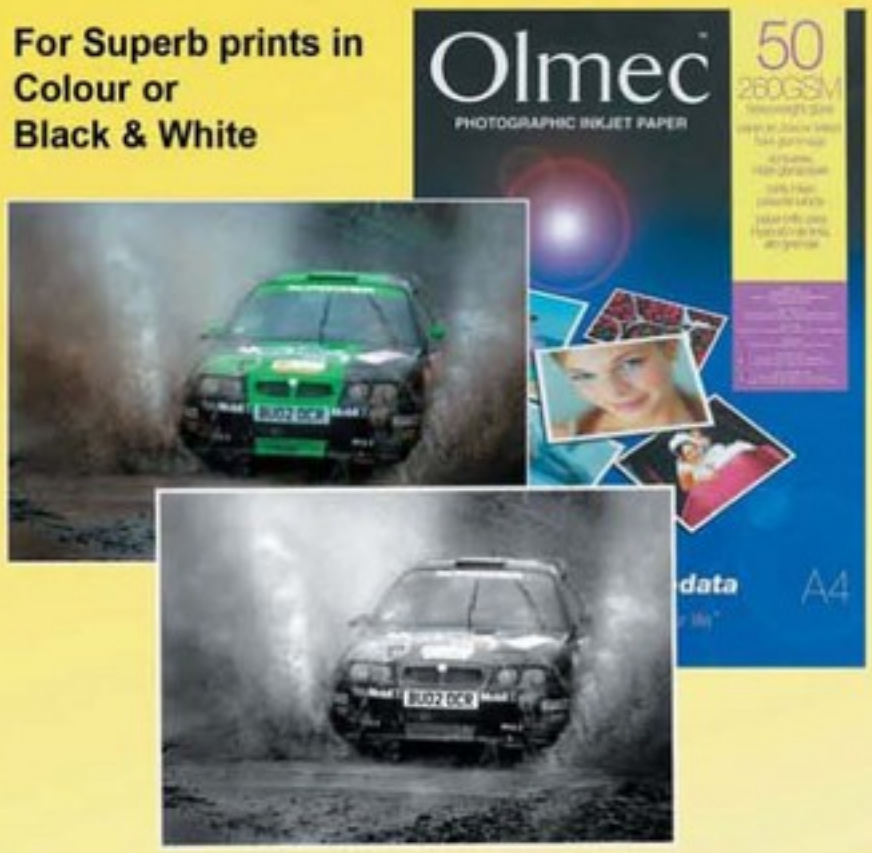

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GROUP TEST

Where should you get your pics printed?

DIGITAL PHOTO PRINTING SERVICES

What Digital Camera COVER FEATURE

Eight online and eight in-store digital photo print services are probed by WDC

TRIED & TESTED

Should one print at home, at a local store or online? This is a question we are asked frequently. The answer is always the same; whatever suits you best.

If you print at home you have the flexibility of when to do it and you have the most control over the final result, especially if you want to crop and produce enlargements.

If you don't go into town frequently, or want to avoid the hassle that a trip like this can entail, the option of doing it online is great as long as you have a broadband connection. Online services are also very competitive on price, though you will usually, of course, have to wait a few days for your photos to arrive. By printing at a local store you will have the luxury of getting your prints done in as little as a few minutes and usually no longer than an hour. But the convenience and High Street rents can also add to the cost of the service.

HOW WE TESTED

We placed print orders with eight online and eight in-store digital photo printing services for this review. The collection of twelve photos we selected covered bright and dark conditions, sunny and overcast days, as well as people in order to judge skin tones.

For the enthusiast, the primary objective is to achieve the best print quality so we analyse colour, sharpness, contrast, density, and the avoidance of digital artefacts (like edge-detail serration and break-up), as well as the ability to accommodate the most popular mass market image format without cropping. Standard 6x4in prints are 3:2 format, which is fine for most DSLRs, but most compacts record in 4:3 aspect ratio format, making 6x4.5in or 5.3x4in prints a better, crop-less fit. We refer to these sizes here as 'perfect fit for compacts'.

Other important factors we take into account are customer service, ease of use, convenience, speed of turnaround and, last but not least, value for money (including postage for online services), which doesn't necessarily equate to the cheapest service!

PRINT RATIOS

Standard 6x4in enprints are 3:2 ratio in shape, which is about the same size as most digital SLRs produce. Four-Thirds DSLRs and most compacts, however, have a squarer 4:3 ratio, which means images get cropped top and bottom so they fit the width of the print – unless the lab offers 4:3 ratio prints (usually 5.3x4in). We refer to this as 'perfect fit for compacts.'

TEST BY: IAN BURLEY

Pixum

pixum
www.pixum.co.uk

ONLINE

Overall order cost: £1.93 **Cost per print:** 5p **Postage:** £1.33 **Turnaround time:** 2 days **Thumbnail index print included?** Yes **Perfect fit for compacts?** Yes **Accelerated upload?** Yes **Photo sharing gallery?** Yes

Pixum has always offered very low prices and, despite this, good print quality. What you couldn't be certain of in the past was how long you'd have to wait for your prints to arrive, especially as they are printed in Germany. The good news is that nothing has changed except that our test order arrived just two days after it was placed. Print quality is generally good, with nice colour, though some evidence of broken fine detail was seen in some prints. At 5p at print, Pixum is the cheapest of all the online services, too.

PROS, CONS AND SCORES

FOR
✔ Value, Improved order turnaround, Good colour

AGAINST
✘ Some digital detail break-up evident

PRINT QUALITY	17
FEATURES	18
TURNAROUND TIME	18
EASE OF USE	18
VALUE	19

What Digital Camera GOLD AWARD 90%

Jessops

JESSOPS
YOUR PICTURES. OUR PASSION.
www.jessops.com

ONLINE

Overall order cost: £2.19 **Cost per print:** 10p **Postage:** 99p **Turnaround time:** 2 days **Thumbnail index print included?** No **Perfect fit for compacts?** Yes **Accelerated upload?** Yes **Photo sharing gallery?** Yes

Since last year Jessops has introduced its HP Snapfish-powered Picture House online service. Prices are competitive, the service is easy to use, quality is good and the order only took two days to arrive. You also have the option of collecting your photos from your local Jessops store, saving postage along the way. In the past we've found the Snapfish print quality wanting but this year it looks like they've put in the effort and made improvements. Colour isn't as good as the very best here, but it's not too bad.

PROS, CONS AND SCORES

FOR
✔ Easy to use, Good value

AGAINST
✘ Prints slightly dark and can exhibit some yellow bias

PRINT QUALITY	16
FEATURES	18
TURNAROUND TIME	18
EASE OF USE	18
VALUE	18

What Digital Camera RECOMMENDED 88%

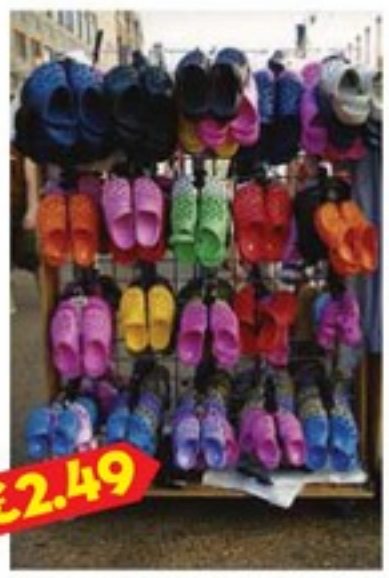


Foto.com

FOTO.com
Digital photo printing
www.foto.com

ONLINE

Overall order cost: £2.49 **Cost per print:** First 50 prints free **Postage:** £2.49 **Turnaround time:** 1 week **Thumbnail index print included?** No **Perfect fit for compacts?** Yes **Accelerated upload?** Yes **Photo sharing gallery?** Yes

Foto.com distinguished itself by taking the longest, by some way, to get their print order back to us. Their tracking system said the order, placed on a Friday, was printed and ready for posting on the Saturday. Assuming it was posted the following Monday, it still took until Friday to arrive. Otherwise, the service is pretty good, with a fairly easy to use site and basically good print quality; darker than average, but with clean colours. Pricing is competitive for large print orders, but less so for smaller orders.

PROS, CONS AND SCORES

FOR
✔ Larger order value

AGAINST
✘ Very long wait for the order, Prints slightly too dark

PRINT QUALITY	16
FEATURES	17
TURNAROUND	12
EASE OF USE	17
VALUE	18

What Digital Camera 80%

Bonusprint

BONUSPRINT
www.bonusprint.co.uk

ONLINE

Overall order cost: £2.70 **Cost per print:** 10p **Postage:** £1.50 **Turn around time:** 2 days **Thumbnail index print included?** No **Perfect fit for compacts?** Yes **Accelerated upload?** Yes **Photo sharing gallery?** Yes

Bonsuprint offers a very good all-round service and at a competitive price. The website is quite easy to follow and you can choose perfect fit print sizes. Uploading is reasonably quick and the prints arrived after two days, which is about the norm. There are no complaints about print quality either. Colours are not over-saturated and there are no signs of digital artefacts. An index print would have been nice, but overall, it has to be said that Bonusprint does offer a competent service that is hard to ignore.

PROS, CONS AND SCORES

FOR
✔ Very good print quality, Good website, Good price

AGAINST
✘ An index print would have been nice

PRINT QUALITY	18
FEATURES	17
TURNAROUND TIME	18
EASE OF USE	18
VALUE	18

What Digital Camera RECOMMENDED 89%

Boots

www.boots.com

ONLINE

Overall order cost: £2.70 **Cost per print:** 10p **Postage:** £1.50 **Turnaround time:** 2 days **Thumbnail index print included?** No **Perfect fit for compacts?** No **Accelerated upload?** Yes **Photo sharing gallery?** Yes

While being one of the dearer options, our Boots online photo printing experience was one of the least satisfying. Not being compatible with Windows Vista, we did manage to install the plug-in using a Windows XP machine and from then on things worked pretty well. A good turnaround time of two days can be expected, but sadly, all our prints had a scratch running the length of them and colours were relatively muted, with foliage greens going yellow. Digitally serrated sharp edges were also spotted.

PROS, CONS AND SCORES

FOR
✔ Reasonable turnaround time

AGAINST
✘ Muted colours, Scratched prints, No perfect fit option

PRINT QUALITY	14
FEATURES	16
TURNAROUND TIME	18
EASE OF USE	16
VALUE	14

What Digital Camera 78%

Photobox

PhotoBox

www.photobox.co.uk

ONLINE

Overall order cost: £2.70 **Cost per print:** 10p **Postage:** £1.50 **Turnaround time:** Next day **Thumbnail index print included?** No **Perfect fit for compacts?** Yes **Accelerated upload?** No **Photo sharing gallery?** Yes

Photobox has been a consistently high performer in recent years and one of the few services that can turnaround mid-afternoon orders for delivery by the next morning. Photobox is no longer alone in achieving a next day service, but what did surprise us was a glitch in the print quality; the dreaded digital saw-tooth effect was spotted on some of our prints. Apart from that, colour and contrast were fine, while it's also worth noting that Photobox has one of the best online sharing galleries in the business.

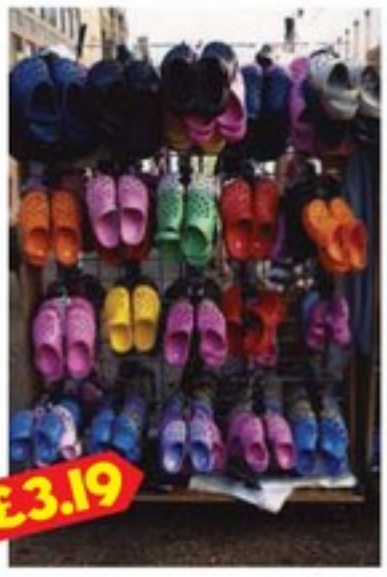
PROS, CONS AND SCORES

FOR
✔ Next day service, Ease of use, Sharing gallery

AGAINST
✘ Evidence of saw-tooth effect on edge detail

PRINT QUALITY	16
FEATURES	18
TURNAROUND TIME	20
EASE OF USE	18
VALUE	17

What Digital Camera Recommended 89%



Kodak

Kodak EasyShare Gallery

www.kodak.co.uk

ONLINE

Overall order cost: £3.19 **Cost per print:** 15p **Postage:** £1.39 **Turnaround time:** 2 days **Thumbnail index print included?** Yes **Perfect fit for compacts?** No **Accelerated upload?** Yes **Photo sharing gallery?** Yes

Kodak's EasyShare Gallery online service is easy to use, though again, the advanced upload plug-in refused to install on our Windows Vista PC. It's also disappointing that Kodak doesn't offer a 'perfect' fit option for the majority of digital cameras, including its own range. Print quality is good, though colour bias is towards red/blue and the prints were slightly too dark. Service is pretty average; not the best print quality, but a good turnaround time and good features. But the biggest issue is price – it's too high.

PROS, CONS AND SCORES

FOR
✔ Easy to use, Good print quality

AGAINST
✘ No perfect size option, Expensive

PRINT QUALITY	16
FEATURES	17
TURNAROUND TIME	18
EASE OF USE	18
VALUE	16

What Digital Camera Recommended 85%

Colorama

COLORAMA photoimaging

www.colorama.co.uk

ONLINE

Overall order cost: £3.19 **Cost per print:** 10p **Postage:** £1.99 **Turnaround time:** Next day **Thumbnail index print included?** No **Perfect fit for compacts?** Yes **Accelerated upload?** Yes **Photo sharing gallery?** No

Unfortunately, the wooden spoon for image quality has to go to Colorama this year. The prints looked washed out compared to most of the others, the culprit being poor black density. This is a shame because the order was turned around next day, the only other service apart from Photobox to manage this feat. The catch here is that you pay more for the postage, with £1.99 being the highest charge of the lot. And the final straw is that Colorama doesn't offer any facility for online albums and sharing.

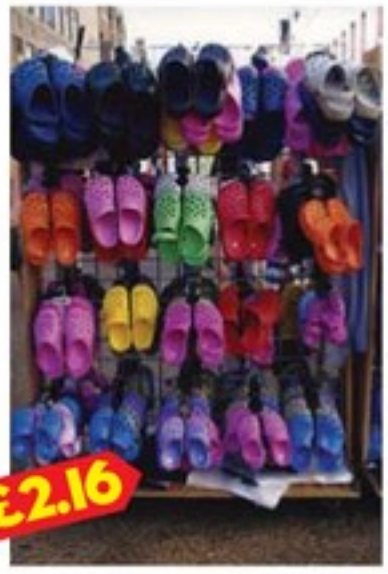
PROS, CONS AND SCORES

FOR
✔ Next day turnaround

AGAINST
✘ Poor print quality, No online sharing, Poor value

PRINT QUALITY	12
FEATURES	14
TURNAROUND TIME	20
EASE OF USE	17
VALUE	14

What Digital Camera 77%



Sainsbury's

Sainsbury's

Apsley, Hemel Hempstead

Overall order cost: £2.16 **Cost per print:** 18p **Service:** 1 hour **Thumbnail index print included?** Yes **Perfect fit for compacts?** No **Kiosk upload?** Yes

Tesco staff should visit the Sainsbury's store we used for some pointers. The staff were very efficient, enthusiastic and friendly and the picture upload kiosks were all working and easy to use. A perfect fit option wasn't offered, but we were shown how to use zoom adjustment to avoid the system cropping bits of the image that were valuable. Although we chose a one-hour service, we were also told that when things aren't busy, prints could be ready in just 15 minutes. The print prices are good value too.

PROS, CONS AND SCORES

FOR
✔ Helpful staff, Easy to use kiosk interface

AGAINST
✘ No perfect fit option, Prints quite contrasty

PRINT QUALITY	17
FEATURES	17
SERVICE	18
EASE OF USE	19
VALUE	18

What Digital Camera RECOMMENDED **89%**

Tesco

TESCO

Hemel Hempstead/Watford

Overall order cost: £2.16 **Cost per print:** 18p **Service:** 1 hour **Thumbnail index print included?** Yes **Perfect fit for compacts?** No **Kiosk upload?** Yes

Oh what a nightmare! After three visits on separate days to our local store in Hemel Hempstead, we gave up because its one and only kiosk for digital uploading wouldn't work. We then tried the Tesco Extra Watford superstore, but there were technical issues there too. Eventually the Watford store managed to accept our order via USB stick but the resulting prints were decidedly dark. Although Tesco's pricing is competitive, the print quality and service let them down badly. The staff seemed rather stressed too.

PROS, CONS AND SCORES

FOR
✔ Not much

AGAINST
✘ Technical mayhem, Dark prints

PRINT QUALITY	12
FEATURES	16
SERVICE	12
EASE OF USE	15
VALUE	15

What Digital Camera **70%**

Klick Photopoint

Klick Photopoint

Hemel Hempstead

Overall order cost: £2.64 **Cost per print:** 22p **Service:** Instant picture kodak dye-sub kiosk **Thumbnail index print included?** No **Perfect fit for compacts?** No **Kiosk upload?** Yes

Klick Photopoint stores are the high street presence of the Max Spielman photo group. Lab prints from digital images have to be sent away for a week-long service, so the shop has several Kodak dye-sub kiosks for in-store digital printing. These are easy to use and just a couple of minutes after placing your order you have your prints. However, dye-sub print quality isn't usually a match for a lab or inkjet prints; ours had a yellow cast and lacked punch, plus digital artefacts in fine detail. The price, however, was reasonable.

PROS, CONS AND SCORES

FOR
✔ Easy to use kiosk, Good price

AGAINST
✘ Dye-sub print quality not as good as lab prints

PRINT QUALITY	15
FEATURES	17
SERVICE	18
EASE OF USE	18
VALUE	16

What Digital Camera **84%**

Asda

ASDA

(Sony dye-sub kiosk)

Overall order cost: £3.48 **Cost per print:** 29p **Service:** Instant picture dye-sub kiosk **Thumbnail index print included?** No **Perfect fit for compacts?** No **Kiosk upload?** Yes

Larger Asda stores have recently been kitted out with the latest generation of Sony dye-sub photo kiosks. No mini-lab is involved and prints appear in front of you within a couple of minutes of finalising your order. We found the kiosk very easy to use, though we didn't notice a perfect fit option. Dye-sub print quality is rarely as good as a good lab or inkjet print, but the Sony result wasn't bad, only spoiled by a strong yellow bias. At 29p each, these prints are also considerably more expensive than Asda's conventional service.

PROS, CONS AND SCORES

FOR
✔ Easy to use, Very fast

AGAINST
✘ Not particularly cheap, Dye-sub print quality

PRINT QUALITY	16
FEATURES	17
SERVICE	19
EASE OF USE	18
VALUE	16

What Digital Camera RECOMMENDED **86%**

Boots Hemel Hempstead

Overall order cost: £3.60 **Cost per print:** 30p **Service** 1 hour **Thumbnail index print included?** No **Perfect fit for compacts?** No **Kiosk upload?** Yes

This particular Boots store has been upgraded since we last visited and now offers more kiosks for uploading orders, so there is less likelihood of waiting in line. Unfortunately, there was no perfect fit option and at 30p per print, the price is not very competitive for small print orders. However, print quality was very good indeed, with accurate colours and spot-on density and contrast. If you don't mind the price premium in return for better quality, then Boots is certainly a lab to consider.

PROS, CONS AND SCORES

FOR
✔ Good kiosks, Very good print quality

AGAINST
✘ Not particularly cheap

PRINT QUALITY	19
FEATURES	17
SERVICE	18
EASE OF USE	17
VALUE	16

What Digital Camera RECOMMENDED 87%

Jessops St. Albans

Overall order cost: £3.60 **Cost per print:** 30p **Service:** 1 hour **Thumbnail index print included?** No **Perfect fit for compacts?** No **Kiosk upload?** Yes

Not all Jessops stores have an in-store lab, but the ones that do appear well equipped and the one we visited had an array of kiosks for order uploading so the chance is you won't have to wait long even if it's busy. The software interface is easy to use, but we didn't spot a perfect fit option. The prints were contrasty and lacking in dynamic range, with over-dark shadows and over-light highlights, though colour was good. Overall, not too bad, though at 30p per print we did expect a little more.

PROS, CONS AND SCORES

FOR
✔ Easy to use kiosks

AGAINST
✘ Disappointing print quality for the money

PRINT QUALITY	15
FEATURES	17
SERVICE	18
EASE OF USE	18
VALUE	15

What Digital Camera 83%

Kodak Express Rickmansworth

Overall order cost: £4.20 (plus 50p surcharge on card payments below £5) **Cost per print:** 35p **Service** 1 hour **Thumbnail index print included?** No **Perfect fit for compacts?** Yes (by request) **Kiosk upload?** Yes

Kodak Express franchise stores look much the same; you go in and are immediately surrounded by countless picture frames and accessories. In the back of the shop is the mini lab and customers have access to a couple of kiosks to upload and order their prints. The kiosk we used was simple to use, but no perfect fit option was offered. After enquiring with the staff, we were told they'd mark our order for un-cropped printing and they were good to their word. Print quality is very good, but this was matched with a stiff price.

PROS, CONS AND SCORES

FOR
✔ Helpful staff, Good print quality

AGAINST
✘ Expensive, Credit card surcharge

PRINT QUALITY	18
FEATURES	18
SERVICE	17
EASE OF USE	16
VALUE	17

What Digital Camera RECOMMENDED 86%

Snappy Snaps St. Albans

Overall order cost: £6.00 **Cost per print:** 60p **Service:** 1 hour **Thumbnail index print included?** Yes **Perfect fit for compacts?** No **Kiosk upload?** Yes

Snappy Snaps is a respected high street photo processing franchise network and it has rated highly in our past reviews. Print quality didn't disappoint this time either, though the 60 pence per print charge is almost double the next dearest. And we were wrongly advised about perfect fit printing and ended up with bordered prints instead. To be fair to Snappy Snaps, you can get much better print prices with larger orders. Price may be a factor, but you get what you pay for, and Snappy Snaps certainly delivers the goods.

PROS, CONS AND SCORES

FOR
✔ Very good print quality

AGAINST
✘ Punitive pricing, Bad in-store advice

PRINT QUALITY	19
FEATURES	17
SERVICE	18
EASE OF USE	16
VALUE	15

What Digital Camera RECOMMENDED 85%

AT A GLANCE

Overview

A full side-by-side comparison of the specs and scores of both online and in-store services

ONLINE GROUP SPECS

	BONUSPRINT	Boots	COLORAMA	FOTO.com	JESSOPS	Kodak	PhotoBox	pixum
Overall order cost	£2.70	£2.70	£3.19	£2.49	£2.19	£3.19	£2.70	£1.93
Cost per print	10p	10p	10p	First 50 prints free	10p	15p	10p	5p
Postage	£1.50	£1.50	£1.99	£2.49	99p	£1.39	£1.50	£1.33
Turnaround time	2 Days	2 Days	Next day	1 Week	2 Days	2 Days	Next day	2 Days
Thumbnail index print included	No	No	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes
Perfect fit for digital	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
Accelerated upload	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
Photo sharing gallery	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Print quality	18/20	14/20	12/20	16/20	16/20	16/20	16/20	17/20
Features	17/20	16/20	14/20	17/20	18/20	17/20	18/20	18/20
Turnaround time	18/20	18/20	20/20	12/20	18/20	18/20	20/20	18/20
Ease of use	18/20	16/20	17/20	17/20	18/20	18/20	18/20	18/20
Value	18/20	14/20	14/20	18/20	18/20	16/20	17/20	19/20
Overall	89%	78%	77%	80%	88%	85%	89%	90%

IN-STORE GROUP SPECS

	ASDA	Boots	JESSOPS	Klick	Kodak express	Sainsbury's	Snappy Snaps	TESCO
Overall order cost	£3.48	£3.60	£3.60	£2.64	£4.20	£2.16	£6.00	£2.16
Cost per print	29p	30p	30p	22p	35p	18p	60p	18p
Service	Instant kiosk	1 Hour	1 Hour	Instant kisok	1 Hour	1 Hour	1 Hour	1 Hour
Thumbnail index print included	No	No	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
Perfect fit for digital	No	No	No	No	Yes	No	No	No
Kiosk upload	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Print quality	16/20	19/20	15/20	15/20	18/20	17/20	19/20	12/20
Features	17/20	17/20	17/20	17/20	18/20	17/20	17/20	16/20
Service	19/20	18/20	18/20	18/20	17/20	18/20	18/20	12/20
Ease of use	18/20	17/20	18/20	18/20	17/20	19/20	16/20	15/20
Value	16/20	16/20	15/20	16/20	17/20	18/20	15/20	15/20
Overall	86%	87%	83%	84%	86%	89%	85%	70%

AND FINALLY

Our Verdict

For sheer value, online is definitely the best option, even when adding on the cost of postage. The uploading experience, in general, is better online too because you aren't standing in front of a public kiosk, perhaps with others waiting behind you. The options on the better online service websites were often more comprehensive, too. Of the online services, Pixum edged Jessops, Photobox and Bonusprint out on sheer value and general competence, though of these four Bonusprint is the one to go for if print quality is the top factor. Of the in-store services, Snappy Snaps may be 60p a print compared to others charging as little as 18p but the quality is top notch. If you are in a desperate rush and don't mind the characteristically different quality of dye-sub prints, you can be in and out in minutes with Asda, with their new Sony instant printer kiosks, and prices are better than they used to be too. Tesco's awful service was quite a shock, though. All the more interesting, then, that arch-rival Sainsbury's came top in this half of the group test offering good value, service and decent print quality.

Sainsbury's

What Digital Camera IN-STORE GROUP TEST WINNER

pixum

What Digital Camera ONLINE GROUP TEST WINNER

30% off Enlargement Prints

PhotoBox, the UK's no.1 online digital photo sharing, storing and printing service, is offering **30% off** enlargement prints to all readers of **What Digital Camera**

Offer Ends 31st October 2007

Visit **www.photobox.co.uk/wdcbigprints** and follow the easy steps to join for free, and claim your 30% discount

Get great looking photo prints from the UK's first online lab. Prints from just 5p posted to you or your friends worldwide on the same day as your order!
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PhotoBox®

Terms and Conditions: This offer entitles new customers to 30% off enlargement print sizes as per www.photobox.co.uk/services. This Offer is only valid to new customers, can only be used once per person and is only available via www.photobox.co.uk/wdcbigprints. Offer is not transferable and there is no cash alternative.
This offer can only be used until midnight on the 31st October 2007. Orders using this offer may take up to 1 extra working day to be dispatched.
Offers do not include postage and packaging. PhotoBox reserves the right to refuse to print images that are deemed offensive or which are copyright protected.
For full terms and conditions, go to www.photobox.co.uk/legal

SIGMA

OUR WORLD

Tim Matsui: Born in 1973 in California. Became a freelance photographer, after earning a degree in photojournalism, from the University of Washington. Established the FEAR Project, a non-profit media organisation creating documentaries about sexual violence, the environment and other vital social issues.

Photo data: Sigma 18-200mm F3.5-6.3 DC OS. 1/400-second exposure at f/6.3.

TIM MATSUI SHOOTS THE WORLD WITH A SIGMA LENS.

Traveling light for a high rugged climb, overlooking Oregon's Trout Creek, is made possible by Sigma's lightweight and compact optically stabilised lens.

Sigma's super-zoom lens for digital SLRs captured this reflective moment at twilight to perfection. The exclusive built-in Sigma Optical Stabiliser virtually eliminates the problem of camera shake that can otherwise mar telephoto photography in such low light conditions. SLD (Special Low Dispersion) glass and aspherical elements effectively eliminate aberrations whilst super multilayer coating cuts flare and ghosting. An impressive minimum focusing distance of 45cm/17.7in. throughout the entire zoom range gives a maximum reproduction ratio is 1:3.9. A matched petal-shaped lens hood is included and the non-rotating front element is ideal for accepting circular polarising filters.

*Vignetting (a darkening of the corners of the image) will occur if the lens is used with digital SLR cameras with image sensors larger than APS-C size or 35mm SLRs, and APS SLRs

NEW

● Available for:
Sigma SA, Canon EOS and Nikon-D digital SLRs

A high quality super-zoom lens for digital SLRs, with Sigma's exclusive Optical Stabiliser to minimise the effects of camera shake.

SIGMA 18-200mm F3.5-6.3 DC OS FOR DIGITAL

Σ Sigma Imaging (UK) Ltd, 13 Little Mundells, Welwyn Garden City, Herts. AL7 1EW. Tel: 01707 329 999 Fax: 01707 327 822
www.sigma-imaging-uk.com E-mail: sales@sigma-imaging-uk.com

GROUP TEST

Mid-range compacts put to the WDC test

Compacts for £150 and under

Don't be fooled – even with just £150 you can get a whole lot of camera for your money...

Tested by Matt Golowczynski and Paul Nuttall

What Digital Camera COVER FEATURE

If you've taken the photographic plunge but don't quite have the budget for a top-end camera, then you're in luck, as plenty of options now exist for mid-range compacts.

Many of these may not feature the delights that their pricier counterparts have to offer, but good zoom ranges and faster processors now make them more than acceptable options. Combined with higher-resolution sensors and more exposure options, many can provide a perfect building block between your first camera and the next steps on your photographic journey. But as we shall see, appearances can be deceptive so let's find out what *really* happens on the inside...

Olympus mju 740

7MP Price £150 **Web** www.olympus.co.uk

Taking a slight diversion from that of the camera norm, the mju legacy continues with the 740's 5x optical zoom lens and weatherproof metallic body. Stretching to a respectable 180mm, the lens is coupled with ISO-based image stabilisation, while the ISO range up to 1600 provides good usability in most lighting conditions. Though its weatherproof abilities seem to be the camera's main shouting point, the mode dial only wants to turn if operated with the driest of hands and makes for a slight delay in operation. Nevertheless, convenience is provided in the form of 23 scene modes and 13 Guide modes. Image quality, it has to be said, doesn't perform as expected. Exposures are generally sound, though sometimes a little overexposed, and contain a good amount of detail, but corner-sharpness, noise and green fringing mar a few too many images.

Casio Exilim EX-Z75

7MP Price £150 **Web** www.casio.co.uk

Marketed as 'user-friendly, fun and convenient', the EX-Z75 bridges the gap between a simple point-and-shoot and a compact with a little more to play with. A straightforward user-interface together with slim styling suggests the young-and-trendy market at which it is aimed, while an impressive 34 scene modes cater for most situations. A 2.6in wide LCD screen allows an inch of room for shooting information, with the rest displaying a 115,000 pixel image. The camera's buttons are a major disappointment though, being small, thin and a little too embedded within the camera's body for comfortable pressing. Images, though correctly exposed, boast a range of inaccuracies, from edge and corner drop-off to some pretty severe green fringing, with many appearing 'smudgy'. Overall, the camera seems to be another example of one that looks great and is good for small print sizes (6x4in) but somewhat incompetent if its full 7MP resolution is to be utilised.

Canon PowerShot A560

7MP Price £140 **Web** www.canon.co.uk

As expected from Canon's PowerShot range, manual control and handling are the key selling points of the A560, but coupled with a 4x optical zoom lens and a DIGIC III processor make it even more of an appealing proposition. Of course, not everyone will favour the additional bulk of the body, but then again this camera isn't targeted at the masses, more the enthusiastic beginner. The only camera here with a viewfinder, the layout feels comfortable and doesn't infringe on usability, while the feature set offers pretty much all that is expected. The icing on this cake, however, comes in the form of face-detection technology and the processing engine, with the latter displaying a notable performance in terms of operational speed. Images produced by the A560 are hard to fault and undoubtedly the best in this group tested: bursting with detail and a displaying a fantastic dynamic range, while maintaining great edge and corner-detail and showing minimal fringing – another fine compact for Canon to be proud of.

Samsung L700

7MP Price £130 **Web** www.samsungcamera.co.uk

Samsung's come a long way in the past couple of years, producing some cameras with really interesting spec. The L700 may not have the looks of the NV range, but it holds its own in the sub £200 price bracket, with a slim metal casing. It offers 7.2MP, a 3x optical zoom lens, and a bright 2.5in LCD. Samsung believes in packing in the extras and the company makes great claims about the L700's movie capability, which includes zooming, in-camera editing and image stabilisation. It also has picture-editing functions, including colour conversions and cropping. Like some other cameras at this price point, Samsung's claim of image stabilisation (or 'no moving parts ASR', as Samsung calls it) is based on the automatic raising of the sensor's sensitivity, in this case up to ISO 1600. The camera does a competent job of taking quick and easy pictures. Images are well exposed, sharp and pleasant, if a bit flat, but there is little to criticise too heavily. Its host of in-camera features add make this a stand-out compact, especially at its current street price of around £130.

BenQ T700

7MP Price £140 **Web** www.benq.co.uk

With the demand for larger LCD screens at an all-time high, yet the need for compact design ever-present, touch-screen technology is becoming increasingly important in camera design. The 7MP T700 is the only model in our group to feature touch-screen – and one at 3in – into its sleek 15mm deep chassis, a combination that enables it to claim being the world's slimmest 3in touch-screen model. Optical technology has not been compromised for such headline-grabbing features with BenQ incorporating a 3x Pentax optical zoom lens and a maximum ISO 1200 in shake-free mode. In use the T700 provides an effective touch-screen based menu interface, with clear icons, intuitive menus and, above all, responsive buttons. Image quality is good on the whole, with exposures tending to be both accurate and pleasing on the eye, though the white balance tends to produce slightly warm images, with shadows and highlights not being handled particularly well either. The T700 can lay claim to being not only one of the best touch-screen compacts but also one of the most affordable.

Olympus FE-240

7MP Price £150 **Web** www.olympus.co.uk

Olympus's ever-growing FE range has a tradition of transferring sleek design and advanced features to the price-conscious consumer – a trend continued in the 7MP FE-240. Its main selling point is the 5x optical zoom lens, yet the camera impresses across other areas too. The 2.5in LCD screen manages to display images clearly even in difficult lighting, and the slim yet weighty angular chassis gives the camera a real feeling of build quality. However, it is in use that the FE-240 really fails to deliver. The menu system is confusing and unintuitive, making it very difficult to get the shot you want and, alongside non-adjustable ISO settings, render the FE-240 as no more than a compact to own and keep on auto for its lifespan. The images produced are, on the whole, flat and cold. Fringing is controlled to an extent, yet image detail falls off alarmingly towards the frame edges and the overall look of the images is rather messy. Overall, a well-designed camera with an impressive spec which is let down by usability and image quality.

AT A GLANCE

Overview

Image quality, specifications, our likes and dislikes, scores and more – you'll find it all here

Olympus 740

Slightly over-exposed images with fringing and noise creeping in

Casio EX-Z75

Too much fringing and messy images disappoint

Canon A560

Packed full of detail and showing accurate exposures

Samsung L700

A good level of detail but images can be a bit noisy at times

BenQ T700

Slightly warm images but good sharpness and exposure

Olympus 240

Fringing shows with some images lacking detail and appearing 'smudgy'

	Olympus 740	Casio EX-Z75	Canon A560	Samsung L700	BenQ T700	Olympus FE-240
PRICE (Street)	£150	£150	£140	£130	£140	£150
RESOLUTION	7MP	7MP	7MP	7MP	7MP	7MP
MAXIMUM APERTURE	f/3.3 - 5.0	f/3.1 - 5.9	f/2.6 - 5.5	f/3.1 - 5.9	f/2.7 - 5.2	f/3.3 - 5.0
STABILISATION	ISO based	ISO based	ISO based	ISO based	ISO based	ISO based
EXPOSURE MODES	Auto, 23 scene modes	Auto, 34 scene modes	Auto, Man 11 scene modes	Prog, Auto 11 scene modes	Auto 28 scene modes	Auto 15 scene modes
ISO RANGE	80-1600	50-400	80-1600	50-1600	80-1200	50-1000
LCD/VIEWFINDER	2.5in/NO	2.6in wide/NO	2.5in / YES	2.5in /NO	3in /NO	2.5in / NO
MEMORY CARD	xD	SD	SD	SD	SD	xD
FEATURES	16	17	18	17	17	17
DESIGN	17	17	17	17	18	18
PERFORMANCE	18	16	18	17	17	16
IMAGE QUALITY	16	16	18	18	17	15
VALUE	17	17	18	17	19	17
✔ WHAT WE LIKE	Exposure modes, Zoom range	Ease of operation, Style	Image quality, DIGIC III processor	Image quality, Simplicity, design	Image quality, Design, Large touch-screen LCD	Retro angular design, LCD brightness
✘ WHAT WE DON'T LIKE	Image quality, Mode dial	Image quality, Small buttons	AA batteries	Digital Image Stabilisation	Operational speed	User interface, Poor image quality
TOTAL	84%	83%	89%	86%	88%	83%

AND FINALLY

Our Verdict

Our results show that compacts at roughly the same price can perform very differently when tested against each other

The scores prove that BenQ and Samsung have come a long way in delivering a first-class compact, knocking spots off veterans such as Olympus. Both Olympus models are let down by second-rate image quality with Casio's Z75 displaying mediocre performance and images full of flaws. Samsung's L700 boasts a range of features and delivers great images, while BenQ's T700 marries great style, functionality and images to boot. While the T700 is aimed at more style-conscious photographers and Canon's A560 at the technically minded, both show ease of use and great image control and would make a fine choice – even for a first compact – with the latter model just scraping itself an inch above, justifying its worth with superb all-round performance.

PRAKTICA

Mono with a dash of colour

Not every digital camera needs to be silver. Praktica offers one of the largest ranges of digital cameras available in the UK. Our models are as varied in style and colour as they are in features and performance. Resolutions run from entry-level 3 million pixels to 10 million pixels.

See the complete range at

www.praktica-uk.com

OK - our cameras do come in silver too!

PENTACON

PRAKTICA

Praktica (UK) Ltd. St. Albans, Hertfordshire.
Tel: 01727 732 323 Email: sales@praktica-uk.com

£409

Canon S5 IS

Bridge camera boasting a 12x zoom lens and a top ISO of 1600

8MP Price £409 **Web** www.canon.co.uk

Tested by Jamie Harrison

Despite a decline in the sales of bridge cameras, a few manufacturers are still updating and replacing their lines with new models. Canon is continuing to keep the faith with the arrival of the S5 IS. It may cost the same as an entry level DSLR, but it offers a pocket-friendly 12x optical zoom with the bonus of optical Image Stabilisation and a top ISO of 1600.

FEATURES

With its latest DIGIC III processor, Canon claims to have minimised image noise at higher sensitivities allowing for better image quality in low light, which is aided by the threefold IS function offering continuous and one-shot IS as well as a panning mode. The lens also features an Ultrasonic Motor (USM) for quick and quiet focusing, along with an Ultra Low Dispersion (UD) glass element to aid in chromatic aberration reduction.

The processing engine features iSAPS technology: a database of thousands of images that the processor can use to recognise the subject matter being shot, and so automatically enhance the photo's white balance, exposure and so on. Canon also claims this improves focusing speed and accuracy. Autofocusing is further complemented by a nine-point face detection system that can focus on faces.

As it's a bridge camera there's a host of exposure features including in-camera effects and a macro mode that can focus to 0cm.

DESIGN

Despite its long lens the S5 is compact – easy to carry in a bag or over your shoulder. This is thanks to the small sensor, which reduces the size of the optic needed to achieve the focal lengths offered. However, the plethora of controls can take some getting used to – not all are clearly labelled so it's worth reading the handbook. Incidentally, the advanced manual is a PDF file on CD so is hardly portable. The hand grip has a comfortable depth, and both the electronic viewfinder and LCD are bright enough and easy enough to use.

PERFORMANCE

The camera is quick and responsive enough for average use, the zoom moves swiftly and shutter lag is minimal. Writing to the card is OK too, though the frame rate could be quicker if you want to use it for sport or wildlife.

VALUE

You might be getting a lot of zoom for your money, which would be more costly on a DSLR, but the image quality lets it down.

CLOSER LOOK

The stand-out feature of the S5 is the big lens. The 12x zoom is not the longest in the category – that honour goes to Olympus, Panasonic and Fuji, all of whom have announced 18x zoom models. But the S5's 36-432mm equivalent focal length is sure to still be a draw for the wildlife or sports fan.

SPECS & SCORES

SENSOR 1/2.5in 8MP CCD
LENS 36-432mm (12x zoom)
SHUTTER SPEED 15-1/3200sec
EXP MODES PASM, 17Sc
ISO 80-1600
FLASH Built-in
VIEWFINDER EVF
MONITOR 2.5in LCD, 207,000 pixels
OTHER In-camera photo effect editing
POWER 4x AA
SIZE 117 x 80 x 77.7mm
WEIGHT 450g

FEATURES	18
DESIGN	17
PERFORMANCE	15
IMAGE QUALITY	14
VALUE	14

✔ **WHAT WE LIKE**
Nicely balanced, Plenty of features

✘ **WHAT WE DON'T LIKE**
Image noise, Fringing, Poor low-light performance, Inconsistent image quality, I could go on...

What Digital Camera **TOTAL 78%**

OUR VERDICT

The term 'Jack of all trades' was invented for this camera, and the rest of the cliché also rings true. Bridge cameras should be all-rounders, but the Canon PowerShot S5 IS performs inconsistently in different situations. If you avoid low light and shadow areas and stick to using it on bright sunny days you'll be fine, so it's hardly the perfect camera for the summer of 2007.

Image quality www.whatdigitalcamera.com for image samples

One of the problems with small sensors is the increase in image noise, and this is often true as the pixel count is raised. Despite Canon's claims of ISO 1600, I'd not recommend using it, or even going beyond ISO 400 if it can be helped. In low light, the increase in shadow noise is not only intrusive but also unpleasant. This is compounded by the occasional occurrence of fringing in certain conditions.

In the right light with the right subject, the camera can produce sharp images with low noise and good colour. In slightly more challenging conditions, it can't. Furthermore at maximum aperture, the lens's sharpness falls off at the corners slightly. Overall, I found more to complain than to rave about in terms of image quality, which hasn't really happened in a long time.

£500

Sanyo VPC-HD2

Hybrid camera and HD camcorder

SPECS & SCORES

LENS 38-380mm (10x zoom)
ISO 50-1600
EXP MODES PASM, 6 scene
LCD/VIEW 2.2/No
SIZE 80 x 119 x 36mm
WEIGHT 240g
POWER LI

FEATURES	18
DESIGN	17
PERFORMANCE	16
IMAGE QUALITY	15
VALUE	16

✔ **WHAT WE LIKE**
Good design, Comprehensive manual, Size, Price

✘ **WHAT WE DON'T LIKE**
Image quality for both photo and video

TOTAL What Digital Camera **82%**

7MP Price £500
Web www.sanyo.co.uk
Tested by Phil Harpley

Why carry two devices, when you can get a digital camera and video recorder all in one? At a street price of about £375, the Sanyo VPC-HD2 has much to recommend it, with its 7MP sensor, 10x optical zoom and an ISO range of 50-1600. The high-definition video mode records MPEG4 videos at up to 1280x720pixels at 30fps and allows you to take a photo while recording, though this results in dropped frames within the video footage. Along with a very comprehensive manual, the camera comes with software for both video and photo-editing.

The camera feels solid and fits itself nicely into your hand. The location of the on/off button under the foldaway LCD is a little awkward, but does at least make it harder to switch it off by mistake. The layout of the buttons is neat, with all the main functions accessible to your thumb.

Panning the camera too quickly can make the visual image look very jumpy – something accentuated when the zoom is used. The camera design makes it less user-friendly for portrait-format shooting but the pop-up flash can be fired manually.

OUR VERDICT

The VPC-HD2 improves on Sanyo's preceding models and at an improved price, but its poor image quality still affirms its status as a Jack-of-all-trades and master of none.

Image quality

www.whatdigitalcamera.com for image samples

Where the camera least impresses is in its image quality: specifically the noise is apparent on every ISO setting. The lens has barrel distortion at both wide and the telephoto, and fringing is visible throughout the sensitivity range. The video quality is better than that of your average compact, but would not compare to the quality of a similarly priced video camera, and therefore sits somewhat unimpressively in the middle.

£200

Olympus 750

Weatherproof wedge of a compact

SPECS & SCORES

LENS 36-180mm (5x zoom)
ISO 80-1600
EXP MODES Auto, 23 scene
LCD/VIEW 2.5/No
SIZE 96 x 54 x 24.3mm
WEIGHT 120g
POWER LI

FEATURES	17
DESIGN	17
PERFORMANCE	17
IMAGE QUALITY	18
VALUE	17

✔ **WHAT WE LIKE**
Exposures, Operational speed, Brightcapture technology

✘ **WHAT WE DON'T LIKE**
Handling, Slightly small buttons, Visibility in bright light

TOTAL What Digital Camera RECOMMENDED **86%**

7MP Price £200
Web www.olympus.co.uk
Tested by Matt Golowczynski

The mju 750 follows the 740 (reviewed on p59), with an almost identical specification inside its weatherproof metallic body. In fact, the only notable difference is a Dual Image Stabiliation mode.

The 5x optical zoom is complemented by both sensor and ISO-based image stabilisation, the latter of which shifts the ISO up to its full 1600 if necessary. BrightCapture technology improves LCD clarity in low light, and, in use, this is very handy, with the mode's automation pushing it above its peers. The only concern is in sunny conditions, where – as with many compacts – the image is almost obliterated by bright light.

The design is something you're either going to love or scratch your head over. My feelings lie with the latter, largely because it makes shooting and handling awkward.

Operational speed is impressive, though, with quick focusing and a steady-paced zoom, while the 'Guide' and 23 scene modes cover just about every shooting scenario. In addititon, the menu system is fairly self-explanatory and intuitive.

OUR VERDICT

The design makes things a little tricky but the extra zoom range is a bonus and images turn out pretty much as they should. If you take advantage of its weatherproof abilities, you may even come to love it.

Image quality

www.whatdigitalcamera.com for image samples

Despite very few differences between this and the mju 740, images are much better. Exposures are consistently accurate with good gradation and clear shadow detail. ISO 80 and 100 produce great colour and little noise, with this holding up remarkably well up to 400, while edge- and corner-softness shows the greatest improvement. Fringing does creep into contrasting areas, though, blemishing otherwise fine images.

For a full 360 degree virtual tour of these cameras, visit our website at **www.whatdigitalcamera.com**

Nikon L11

Budget entry-level model

SPECS & SCORES

LENS 37.5-112.5mm (3x zoom)
ISO 64-800
EXP MODES Auto, 16 Sc
LCD/VIEW 2.5/No
SIZE 89.5 x 60.5 x 27mm
WEIGHT 125g
POWER 2 x AA

FEATURES	16
DESIGN	17
PERFORMANCE	17
IMAGE QUALITY	16
VALUE	18

✔ **WHAT WE LIKE**
Simple to use,
Value for money

✘ **WHAT WE DON'T LIKE**
Lack of features
Automation

What Digital Camera **TOTAL 84%**

6MP Price £130
Web www.nikon.co.uk
Tested by Jamie Harrison

Entry-level cameras vary from the outstandingly bad to the surprisingly good, and Nikon's compacts in the past have fallen into both camps. This new model, though, is closer to the latter ilk.

The L11 has a 3x optical zoom and is pretty much auto-everything, with only a set of scene modes and Program in the way of exposure control. There's still ±2EV exposure compensation, and the usual flash, macro and movie options, but don't expect to be able to change ISO, metering or other exposure essentials, though.

Where it gains kudos is in its face detection feature and in Nikon's take on anti-shake. Rather than add Optical Image Stabilisation, or even sensor-based IS, the camera analyses the edges of the picture you have just taken, before indicating if it's blurred and asking if you want to save it. This is all well and good, but annoying on a bright afternoon when there's no reason for camera shake, other than when having to hold the camera three feet in front of you to take a picture (as there's no stabilising optical viewfinder).

OUR VERDICT

The Nikon Coolpix L11 is a competent point and shoot camera, but that's all it does – no bells, no whistles and no control. An ideal first camera for the more technically challenged members of your family.

Image quality

www.whatdigitalcamera.com for image samples

This isn't a bad performer for its spec and price. Images are generally well exposed, sharp and noise free – in bright light. It needs a little help when shooting overly bright or dark subjects, in which case, exposure compensation is on hand to manually help. Highlights tend to blow out in overly contrasty situations – so be careful on your Spanish holidays – but otherwise this is an efficient point-and-shooter with good image quality.

Sony W200

12MP feature-packed compact

SPECS & SCORES

LENS 35-105mm (3x zoom)
ISO 100-3200
EXP MODES Auto, P, M, 9 Sc
LCD/VIEW 2.5/Yes
SIZE 91 x 58.5 x 27.3mm
WEIGHT 142g
POWER LI

FEATURES	18
DESIGN	18
PERFORMANCE	18
IMAGE QUALITY	18
VALUE	17

✔ **WHAT WE LIKE**
Design, Overall competence,
User interface

✘ **WHAT WE DON'T LIKE**
Limite zoom range, LCD screen
pixel-count

What Digital Camera RECOMMENDED **TOTAL 89%**

12MP Price £329
Web www.sony.co.uk
Tested by Matt Golowczynski

Every now and then a camera comes along that makes parting with a kidney seem a fair swap, and Sony's W200 certainly looks on paper like being a worthy candidate.

Backed by a 12MP sensor, everything that features seems to have its purpose, with seemingly little room left over for frivolities. Manual exposure, spot metering, face-detection and Double Anti-blur technology are driven by a Bionz image processor, and, as is typical on W series models, a viewfinder has been included alongside a 2.5in LCD screen. And despite a sub-standard 115k pixel resolution, even in bright conditions it exposes a much more accurate preview than many other compacts can manage.

Face-detection works impressively well, aggressively adhering its white frame to whatever face the camera encounters, while the camera feels solid and has good weight. Start-up and focusing times are equally impressive but possibly the finest aspect of the W200 is its interface, which improves on the versions seen on previous models and makes the camera a joy to use.

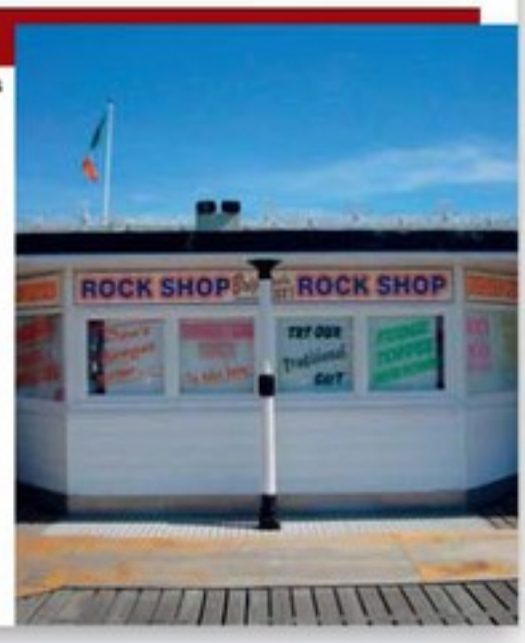
OUR VERDICT

A fantastic camera with a lot to recommend it but a low-quality LCD screen and fairly standard zoom range make its price tag seem somewhat inflated. At a cheaper price it would certainly be a winner.

Image quality

www.whatdigitalcamera.com for image samples

Exposures are accurate and rich with detail, while the auto white balance reproduces accurate colour, even on higher ISO settings. ISO capabilities stretch to 3200, and while the 'watercolour effect' is evident at the highest setting, it's much better than results from lower ISO's on comparable models. Purple fringing is occasionally present, though to no alarming degree, but edge- and corner-softness does make itself known on occasion.



www.whatdigitalcamera.com

Canon Pixma Pro 9500 A3+ Printer

Canon's ten-gun salute shows us exactly what it's made of

Price: £550 **Web:** www.canon.co.uk

Tested by: Ian Burley

The baby end of the fine art photo printer market – where the necessity of pigmented inks for print live and matt print quality rules – has been the preserve of Epson and, more recently, HP, but now Canon's long-expected A3+ pigment ink printer has arrived.

On paper, things look good – no less than ten inks, including green and red, which we have seen in some earlier Canon dye-based A3+ printers and there is no need to swap out matte and photo black cartridges like you have to with one of the Pro9500's main rivals, the Epson Stylus R2400. An optional straight through paper path is provided. More good news is that the Pro9500 is very refined and quiet in use, and like most Canon printers, the print head is replaceable even though it's designed to operate for the lifetime of the printer. It's constructed extremely well too.

But now the bad news. Canon's reputation for being the speed demon of inkjet printers is sadly misplaced here. An A4 borderless print on Premium Plus glossy paper takes over eight minutes to print – four times as long as some of Canon's dye-based photo printers. An A3+ print can take almost 20 minutes. Happily, you can almost halve the print times by not choosing the best quality mode and there is little impact on the final result.

Print quality is not as good as it needs to be in order to compete with its main rivals, the Epson R2400 and the HP Photosmart B9180. Colour is quite good, but prints on various Canon papers turn out contrasty and heavy looking. Prints on fine art papers exhibit cockling where the moisture from the ink is excessive, too. These problems are probably fixable with custom profiling, but it's disappointing that out of the box and with Canon's own papers the results aren't as good as they should be. As with most pigment ink printers, there is a loss of high gloss finish and without a gloss optimiser system, the evenness of the shine on glossy papers isn't perfect. On the other hand, bronzing is well controlled and metamerism under different lighting is acceptable. When used in mono print mode, some good black and white prints can be produced. Printing mono images in colour is less convincing.

> An A3 print can take almost 20 minutes to print

Paper handling is generally very good, though Canon's imposition of a minimum 35mm border on fine art papers is very restrictive. Canon, please let users have an option to set their own borders!

I'm also a bit concerned that the single ink cartridges are quite small for a printer that's designed for A3+ sized prints. That said, the low ink warning started several A3 prints before a cartridge change was required.

Canon includes some interesting software with the Pro9500, including a Photoshop plug-in for quick and simple colour and tone adjustment, but proper custom ICC profiling is probably a better solution overall.

The Canon Pixma Pro9500 is a fabulous item of hardware, but it's £100-£150 dearer than the competition and until Canon makes it print faster and better, Epson and HP won't be losing sleep over this one.

OUR VERDICT

The Pro9500 is beautifully designed and built but slow and expensive, and print quality fails to match that of Epson and HP.

SPECS & SCORES

RESOLUTION 4800 x 2400 dpi
INKS 10 (Black, dark grey, light grey, C, M, Y, light cyan, light magenta, red, green)
MAX PAPER SIZE A3+
BORDERLESS Yes
CONNECTION USB 2.0 Hi-speed
OTHER CD printing, re-placeable print head, front load straight paper path for heavyweight media
SIZE 660 x 354 x 191mm
WEIGHT Approx. 14kg

PRINT QUALITY	16
FEATURES	18
EASE OF USE	17
BUILD QUALITY	19
VALUE	15

✔ **WHAT WE LIKE**
Design, build, paper handling

✘ **WHAT WE DON'T LIKE**
Expensive, slow, best with custom profiles

What Digital Camera RECOMMENDED

TOTAL 85%

Crumpler Pretty Boy Backpack

Price £75
Web www.crumpler.com

The traditional camera bag was never something that exuded much sex appeal, and even now most wouldn't exactly make the grade. But this no longer is the case, since slightly unbalanced Australian bag manufacturer Crumpler came to the fore, splashing its colourful creations on the backs of cyclists and photographers alike.

Essentially a half-photo, half-backpack bag, the Pretty Boy Backpack is split into two sections via a partition that can be unzipped and folded down, with the bottom part dedicated to gear. One body and a few lenses fit into the bottom, which comes with four smaller removable partitions, while the front pocket is ideal for any memory cards or accessories. The bag also has a waterproof lining which, together with the covered zips, offers a great deal of protection.

Made from Crumpler's Chicken Tex Supreme fabric, the construction of the bag is undeniably strong, but up to a point where it impedes its functionality. The zips for each compartment in particular can be difficult to open fully, given how little space there is between the zip and surrounding flap. Of course, this is in place for protective purposes but in use it's a little too awkward, especially as part of its purpose is for the continuous accessing of gear. Also, the top compartment has a somewhat small opening, which can make adding or removing items a bit tricky.

OUR VERDICT

There's no question that your gear is well protected and for general slinging around, the bag is a perfect choice. If only some of the bulletproof-ness of the bag had been sacrificed for easier access, then the bag would be a fantastic backpack option.

SCORES

✔ **WHAT WE LIKE**
Stylish, Super-strong

✘ **WHAT WE DON'T LIKE**
Ease of access

TOTAL
What Digital Camera **82%**

Transcend 80GB SATA Hard Drive

Price £80
Web www.transcend-uk.com

With their price falling and capacities expanding, an external hard drive seems to be the obvious solution for backing up your hard drive. The Transcend StoreJet SATA hard drive provides this but does so in a compact, stylish form.

At only 13mm thick and measuring just slightly larger than your average PDA, it certainly doesn't compete for desktop space and is lightweight enough to qualify as fully portable. Meanwhile, the 5540rpm drive is housed within a sleek aluminium casing, with power coming in the form of a separate USB connection.

In use, it does pretty much exactly what it's supposed to. It's mainly a drag-and-drop affair, with files transferring at speeds of up to 60mbps through a USB 2.0 connection, also featuring a backwards compatibility with a USB 1.1 port. The software package that comes with the drive, StoreJet Elite, allows for the easy backing-up and management of files, with additional encryption and password protection options available.

OUR VERDICT

Coming in a choice of four colours and doing pretty much everything it should, there's no doubt that this is a great-looking device that should meet the storage needs of many.

SCORES

✔ **WHAT WE LIKE**
Ease of use, Style, No driver needed

✘ **WHAT WE DON'T LIKE**
Not much

TOTAL
What Digital Camera GOLD AWARD **90%**

Imagenomic Portraiture

Price £85 ($170)
Web www.imagenomic.com

I'm a big fan of plug-ins for Photoshop, not because I'm lazy (although I am), but because I'm busy. I don't want to spend hours going through my pictures, painstakingly retouching them if there's an automated alternative.

One such essential plug-in is Imagenomic Portaiture. This works with all versions of Photoshop CS, fitting itself neatly into the filters menu. For portrait or people photographers it's an absolute godsend, as it smoothes skin tones to remove blemishes and gives skin a soft glow, without losing detail or affecting other areas of the image.

Imagenomic has developed algorithms that recognise just the skin – from pasty and spotty to day-glo orange spray-tan to ethnic tones – in one easy click. It places a transparency mask over those tones before applying its smoothing effects. There are a few presets for the ultimate loafer, but there's also a variety of controls for the creative or meddling 'Photoshopper' to fine-tune or make their own adjustments. These can then be saved as custom presets to be called up at will.

The preview pane supports single-frame viewing, or alternatively you can split the screen to view the before and after effects. It also has the option to open supplemental preview windows so you can compare different effects and choose the best.

Often, these types of plug-ins can destroy a picture and make it look false or obvious, but this one is very accurate and natural looking, helped in part by the level of control it offers. Even better, you can batch process entire folders of images, thanks to its compatibility with Actions and Photoshop's Image Processor script.

OUR VERDICT

An essential tool for the portraitist or people photographer. If you sell your pictures, a tool such as this is bound to help drive sales.

SCORES

✔ **WHAT WE LIKE**
Great level of control, Compatibility

✘ **WHAT WE DON'T LIKE**
Not much

What Digital Camera GOLD AWARD

TOTAL 90%

National Geographic Earth Explorer

Price £80 **Web** www.supporthexperience.com

As an explorer for the perfect camera bag I have yet to find the Holy Grail, but the ancient engineers of the National Geographic bags are certainly providing a few clues.

The Earth Explorer Shoulder bag has a certain Indiana Jones charm, with its khaki style and relaxed, de-constructed tailoring. Okay, it may not suit everybody's taste, and the Nat Geo logo may be seen as a bit of an affectation, but it's still a world away from the trendy courier bags and traditionally styled 'mug-me-I've-got-an-expensive-camera' type of bags.

The materials used, such as hemp and cotton, are environmentally friendly and reflect National Geographic's dedication to conservation, but that doesn't mean they suffer as a result. The bag is sturdy and well made, with the addition of brass buckles and clasps adding to the traditional look.

Inside the bag your gear is protected with removable padded separators, and the space in this model allows room for a laptop, a couple of camera bodies and lenses as well as four external pockets for accessories. The padding can be removed to allow for extra space, or for more conventional means, perhaps for your daily commute when not exploring Malawi.

OUR VERDICT

A well made and effective camera bag, that sits comfortably and offers easy access to gear.

SCORES

✔ **WHAT WE LIKE**
Well made, Spacious, Style, Comfortable

✘ **WHAT WE DON'T LIKE**
Not everyone's taste

What Digital Camera RECOMMENDED

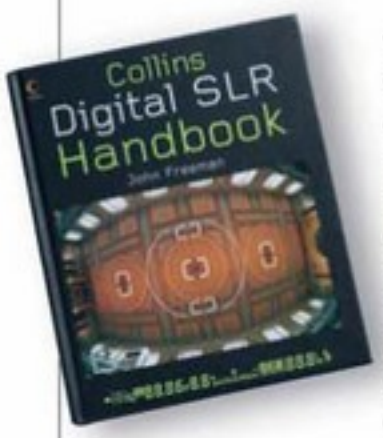
TOTAL 88%

BOOK REVIEWS

This month's round-up of photography books

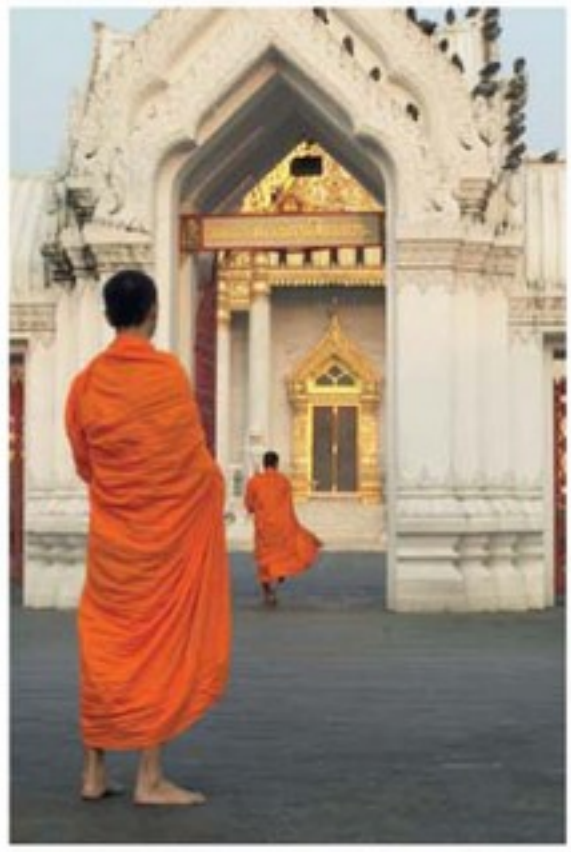
Digital SLR Handbook

Publisher: Collins **Price:** £16.99 **By:** John Freeman



Trying to summarize the entire topic of digital photography in a book can be a somewhat overwhelming task, but John Freeman's Digital SLR Handbook attempts (and succeeds) at covering every conceivable nugget of information today's photographer may need – also dedicating a healthy portion of the book to post-production techniques. The book's simplicity and layout serves as a suitable welcome for anyone new to the topic but perhaps the most useful aspect is the sheer range of topics covered, serving to whet the appetite of any photographer stuck for inspiration – behind the lens or in front of the monitor.

What Digital Camera RECOMMENDED **89%**



The Essential Africa

Publisher: teNeues
Price: £20 **By:** Michael Poliza

Essentially a condensed version of his previous book Africa, this release shows the finest fruits of Poliza's travels through Africa. Despite the title, the book focuses almost exclusively on the safari and wildlife that the southern part of the continent plays host to, with a scattering of landscapes thrown in. Perhaps the finest point of the book highlights the predatory disposition that the featured animals share, while their natural contrast with the landscape that surrounds them works to produce a body of commendable work. Lacking the humorous nature of similar books, the book takes a somewhat serious look at the animals' environments while serving as a handy pictoral guide for any safari enthusiast. **85%**

How To Cheat At Photoshop CS3

Publisher: Focal Press
Price: £24.99 **By:** Steve Caplin

If you've ever had the desire to 'Photoshop-out' George W Bush's hair or reverse the ageing process for Prince Charles' benefit, you'll be pleased to learn of these step-by-step techniques explained in Steve Caplin's How To Cheat in Photoshop CS3. Just two of the examples from what must be the most bizarre book written on the software to date, the book covers almost every conceivable way an image can be manipulated in Photoshop. Though if it wasn't for its comprehensiveness, alongside the 300 images and two hours of video tutorials included on the accompanying DVD, it would be somewhat difficult to forgive the irony of the book's tacky design – or perhaps that's the whole point? **82%**

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Looking into This

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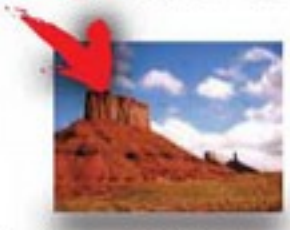
Dirty Sensor.



Ruined Pictures.

SENSOR SCOPE

Do You Know What's on Your Sensor?

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Innovative Digital Product DIMA 2007 WINNER

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What Digital Camera
What to buy... and how to use it

Learning Zone

THIS MONTH

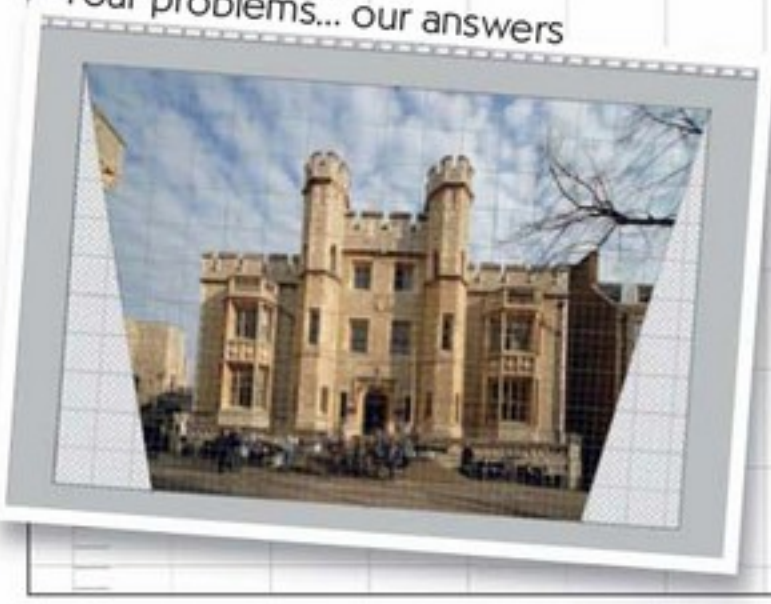
Master Your DSLR p75
This month we take a closer look at ISO

Creative Filters p81
Learn how to use a range of filters

Evening Class p90
Martin Evening passes his verdict

Learn all you need to know about ISO, get tips for using filters creatively and see what Martin Evening thought of your photos

Improve your digital photography TODAY!



AT A GLANCE

Essential Advice

Master your DSLR - ISO p75
Creative Filters p81
Technique Questions & Answers p87
Evening Class p90

SIGMA

OUR WORLD

MICHAEL MELFORD SHOOTS THE WORLD WITH A SIGMA LENS

MICHAEL MELFORD: Born in the U.S. in 1950. Worked as a contributing photographer to LIFE magazine and other major publications. Internationally renowned for location photography. Won Best Editorial Photography award from the Caribbean Tourism Board in 2003. Photo data: SIGMA 17-70mm F2.8-4.5 DC MACRO lens, 1/15 second exposure at f2.8.

Still capturing images long after the sun sets in the Caribbean

The majesty of twilight on the island of Saba in the Caribbean is breathtaking. Only a large aperture lens can capture it in its full glory. The SIGMA 17-70mm zoom lens is just such a lens. Brightness is excellent, with maximum aperture of F2.8 for wide-angle shooting, with a minimum focusing distance of 20cm / 7.9 inches, it has an amazingly close focusing capability at all focal lengths. Designed specifically for digital SLR cameras, the lens image circle is designed to bring the best out of image sensors of APS-C size, used in digital SLRs. Optical design and lens coating is optimised precisely to reduce flare and ghosting. SLD (Special Low Dispersion) coated glass and aspheric lens elements maintain superior image quality throughout the entire range. The lens design incorporates an inner focus system making it particularly suitable for use with circular polarizing filters and petal-shaped lens hoods.

NEW

Available for SIGMA, Canon, Nikon-D, Konica/Minolta and Pentax digital SLR cameras.

FOR DIGITAL

Digital SLRs can capture great close-ups with this large-aperture standard zoom lens.

SIGMA 17-70mm F2.8-4.5 DC MACRO

*Vignetting (a darkening of the corners of the image) will occur if the lens is used with digital SLR cameras with image sensors larger than APS-C size or 35mm SLRs, and APS SLRs

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MASTER YOUR DSLR

LEARNING

ISO Speeds

What Digital Camera COVER FEATURE

Affecting both image noise and shutter speed, your camera's ISO setting is worth a closer look

The basis for proper exposure of your images depends on shutter, aperture and one final key ingredient – the sensitivity to light of the sensor in your camera. Without knowing this, the camera can't begin to measure an accurate reading or provide a true exposure.

This sensitivity is set in the factory and is commonly known as the ISO speed, a standard originally set for the photographic film industry and adopted by digital camera manufacturers.

In fact, the ISO in a digital camera is really an equivalent of the old film standard, with the sensor only truly having one sensitivity. All the other ISO speeds are produced by amplifying the signal from the sensor through the processor.

While this makes digital cameras very useful and adaptable, it can also produce detrimental effects – notably by increasing image noise, which often shows up as speckles over the image. But this is nothing new – the silver halide of film also produces more 'grainy' images as higher ISO speeds are used. One of the key differences between film and digital is that with digital you can rate individual frames at whatever ISO suits the conditions you are shooting in, whereas with film you had to buy a whole roll sensitised to a specific speed. Just like with film, however, an understanding of how ISO settings on a camera work, and how to use it to our advantage, is vital to producing well-exposed and high-quality images in the right light levels and environments.

JAMIE EXPLAINS

How does ISO on digital cameras differ from film?

Film ISO

Back in the mists of time, photographers used films that were rated by the ASA (American Standards Association) system, in which the numerical rating doubled with each doubling of sensitivity. This became the basis for the ISO (International Organisation for Standardization) standard, which came into effect in 1987.

Traditional film technology depends on the light-gathering power of silver halide, with larger silver grains allowing higher ISO speeds. As films get 'faster' (more sensitive), images become more 'grainy'.

Technological developments have produced ever faster films with less obvious grain. For example the general-purpose daylight film of the 1920s and 30s was around 20 ASA. By the 1970s it was ISO 100, but by the end of the 1990s the most popular colour negative film was ISO 400, with little discernible difference in grain size.

Digital ISO

When digital cameras appeared in the 1980s it was decided to keep the standards as close as possible to those of film to allow for an easy transition. Digital ISO is not, however, achieved by using larger pixels (like film uses larger silver grains), and sensors don't display the same characteristic curves as film when under or overexposed. The current standard defines ISO in terms of the light needed to achieve certain qualities, in terms of signal to noise ratio.

Digital ISO is increased in a couple of ways, primarily by a simple amplification of the signal from the sensor to the processor. The other way is via a process known as bit-shifting, whereby the ISO is set through mathematics rather than analog amplification. Many cameras use a combination of both and the quality of the results can vary depending on the quality of the individual system and the type of noise (or electronic interference) generated by the sensor in the first place.

Ultimately, the increase in sensitivity gained by raising the ISO results in an increase of noise in digital cameras, rather than an increase in grain size as occurs on film.

Sensor and processor technology is forever improving. Sensors allowing ISOs up to 3200 are now possible – producing noise that would match that of ISO 400 or even ISO 800 just a few years ago. As the technology matures, we can expect to see further noise reductions and higher ISOs in the future.

ISO AND EXPOSURE

Getting the ISO setting right is as integral to your exposures as the shutter speed and the aperture. Get it wrong and the images could suffer from camera shake, underexposure or heightened noise.

For the most part, in the UK, a bright summer day will allow a low ISO of 100 – this will give you a 'camera shake free' shutter speed of around 1/125sec and an f/8 aperture to ensure sharpness. In poorer lighting conditions you may need to raise the ISO to 200 or 400, to allow for the loss of light from cloud cover or the lower sun and resulting lower brightness.

And as light levels drop further, such as when you go indoors, the ISO can be raised to allow faster shutter speeds and smaller apertures to be used accordingly.

ISO Selection
As well as full one-stop increments, you can select 1/3- or 1/2-stop values, as well as Auto ISO

Fast Access
As ISO is one of the key controls on your camera, there is usually a fast access button to quickly allow you to make changes, rather than go through the menu

ISO AND LOW LIGHT

As we saw last month, the average shutter speed necessary to handhold a non-stabilised camera with a standard zoom lens needs to be over 1/60sec for the majority of people in average conditions. If this can't be achieved due to low light, you have three options – use a tripod, choose a wider aperture or raise the ISO (or number four – put your camera back in its bag).

If, for example, your meter reading is 1/30 sec @ f/8 and you want to keep the aperture as it is, then your only option is to use a camera support of some type or to raise the ISO. A tripod or monopod isn't always practical, so in many cases the only option is to raise the ISO.

Remember the reciprocal rule of aperture and shutter speeds? The same is true of ISO. Raising the sensitivity from ISO 100 to 200 will allow a doubling of the exposure, so that the previous meter reading will now allow a 1/60sec exposure @ f/8 – much better for a handheld shot. Doubling it again (another 1EV increase) to ISO 400 will further enhance your chances of a steady, well-exposed shot by providing an exposure of 1/125sec @ f/8.

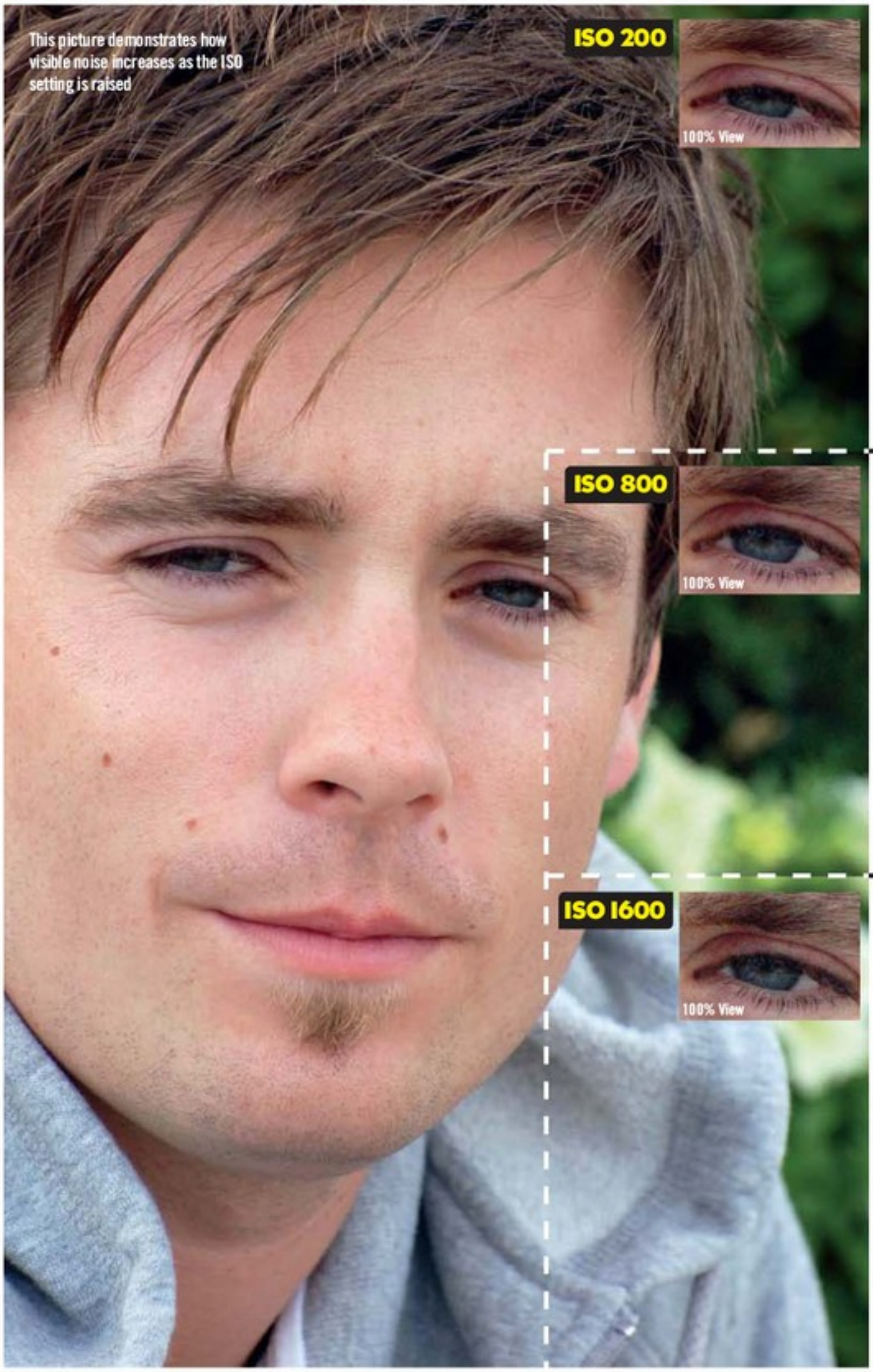
This is especially useful in low-light situations such as sunsets or the longer winter evenings, when the light levels are a far cry from that perfect f/8 June day.

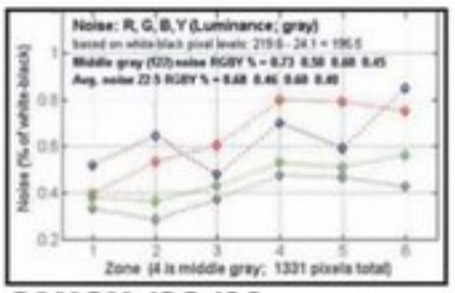
NOISE

Noise is to sensors what grain is to film. Just like with film, as the ISO is raised image quality becomes increasingly affected by noise, which usually appears as coarse speckles over the image. Its minimisation is a common goal of camera designers and photographers alike.

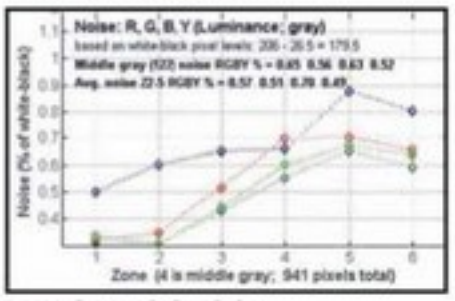
There are two main types of noise: luminance (monochromatic) and the more obtrusive chroma noise, the latter typically displayed as multi-coloured speckles. Noise is most visible in areas of uniform tone, such as skies, and especially in underexposed shadow areas.

Not only does visible noise increase with ISO sensitivity, it may also increase as pixel size decreases, which is why cramming too many pixels onto a small sensor can be detrimental to image quality, and why camera choice should not be based on pixel count alone.

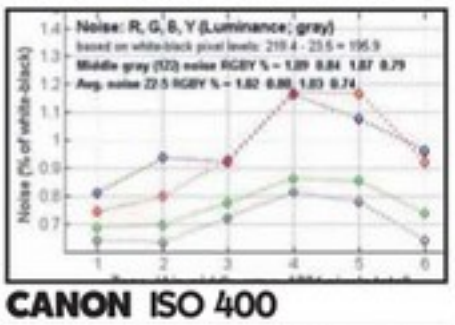




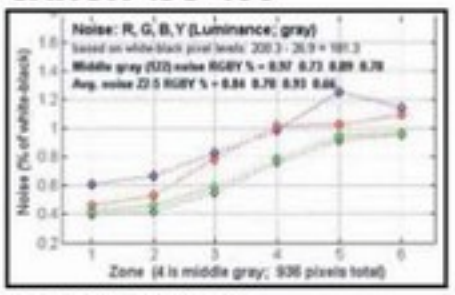
CANON ISO 100



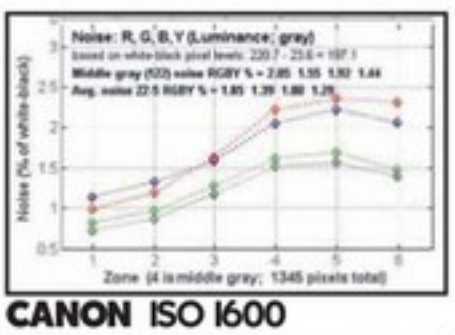
NIKON ISO 100



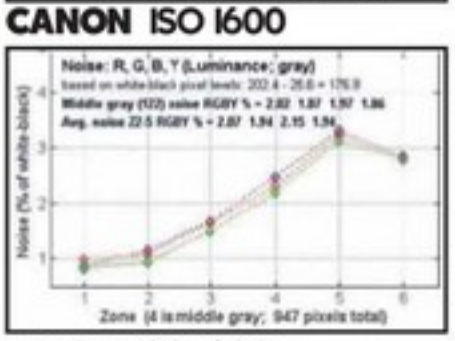
CANON ISO 400



NIKON ISO 400



CANON ISO 1600



NIKON ISO 1600

Above: The level and type of noise can vary between camera models, as these charts show

ISO AND LONG LENSES

One of the reasons that high ISO-rated films became popular during the 1990s was thanks to the proliferation of longer zooms on compact cameras.

The logic is twofold: longer lenses have less light-gathering power than short zooms, thanks to their smaller maximum apertures. This in turn leads to the need for slower shutter speeds to compensate. However, longer lenses are also more prone to camera shake, and the rule of thumb is that to ensure sharp pictures, the shutter speed should be at least as high as the focal lenth in use. So if you are shooting at 200mm, you ideally need a shutter speed of at least 1/250sec to prevent camera shake. If longer lenses force you to use smaller apertures, but at the same time you need to use faster shutter speeds to counter the risk of camera shake (unless you're shooting static subjects and are able to use a tripod), there may be only one solution: raise the ISO. So, with that 200mm lens, if your meter is reading at 1/125, then you need to double the ISO (raise it by one stop), for example, from ISO 200 to 400.

Of course, modern developments in image stabilisation – either optical or camera based – will affect the base figures in these scenarios, but the principle remains the same and so is worth remembering.

ISO AND ACTION

Imagine a combination of the previous scenarios – you're using a long lens and the light is low. Even worse, your subject is moving quickly – or as quick as middle-aged five-a-side footballers can run on a Thursday evening in November.

This is the perfect opportunity to raise your ISO. Increasing the sensitivity will allow two things: the use of a smaller aperture to ensure depth-of-field and sharpness, and a fast shutter speed to freeze the action and ensure no camera shake.

In fact, even on a bright day it may be worth raising the ISO just to allow faster shutter speeds of around 1/500sec, to freeze any action happening in front of your lens.

DON'T MISS NEXT MONTH We look at improving colour accuracy using white balance.
November issue on sale 5th Oct. Why not subscribe to be sure of getting your copy? See page 71 for details.

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Creative Filters for fun effects

Filters are back, and selling better than ever. Here's a few that are worth finding room for in the gadget bag

Filters, those sheets of glass or resin you fix to the front of your lens, are making a comeback, as more and more photographers realise that it's better to get the effect you want while you're taking the picture, than to spend hours on your computer trying to replicate the effect afterwards.

Last month we looked at the two essential filters every landscape photographer should have in their kit bag – the polariser and the ND grad. This month we look at another selection of filters which, although not essential, can come in useful in certain genres for specific effects.

Round or square?

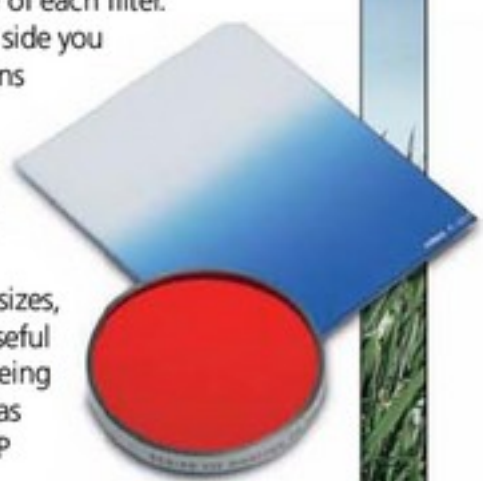
There are two main types of filter system: square and round. Here are the pros and cons of each:

Round: These screw into the thread on the front of the lens and tend to be made from top-quality optical glass. Their main advantage is that they don't require bulky holders to attach them to the lens, so you can still use the dedicated hood that came with your lens.

Their biggest drawback is that they only fit one diameter of lens, so if you have several lenses with different-sized threads you'll need to buy duplicate filters in each size. Alternatively, you could buy just one in the largest size you'll need and use step-down rings to attach it to your other lenses. Some filters are easier to use in their screw-in form, such as polarisers. Others, such as grads, aren't good at all because you can't move them up and down as required.

Square: Square (or rectangular) filters tend to be made from resin, not glass, but image quality is generally considered indistinguishable from glass in normal viewing. Slotting into holders which attach to the lens via adaptor rings, their benefit is that they will fit all your lenses, so you only need to buy one of each filter.

On the minus side you can't use your lens hood and the one that comes with the holder isn't great. Slot-in filter holders come in various sizes, with the most useful for DSLR users being the 85mm type as used by Cokin's P series system.



WORDS AND PICTURES: NIGEL ATHERTON

Filters for...

Black & White

Tonal control in mono photography

It has always been the received wisdom that if you want black and white prints with digital photography, it's best to shoot in colour and convert to mono on your computer afterwards. This is because most editing software offers far more control over the relative tones in the image than the camera does. This assumes, of course, that you have a computer or want to use it for processing your photos. However, just as not everyone had their own darkroom in the days of film, a significant minority of digital photographers prefer to get the effect they want in the camera and print straight from the card, bypassing their computers. And with technology such as PictBridge – now a standard feature on most modern printers – it's easier than ever to connect a camera directly for printing.

Pretty much every digital camera has the means, somewhere in the menu, to switch to black and white capture. Selecting this setting enables you to treat your DSLR or compact as though it were loaded with black and white film. On most cameras, however, you will only have limited control over the grey tones that the various colours in your scene will record as – by adjusting the contrast, for example. Enter the black and white filter set.

How they work

This group, comprising solid yellow, orange, red and green filters, work by blocking out their opposite colour, and so rendering them darker in the image. A yellow filter darkens blues in your scene, such as a blue sky. An orange filter does the same but has a more pronounced effect, and a red has the most extreme effect, turning a deep blue sky almost black. On the other hand, red flowers will record as white when photographed through a red filter, while green ones will lighten skies and foliage while darkening reds and oranges, but can make lips more prominent in portraits.

Sample Prices

ROUND
Hoya: 58mm = £20 each
67mm = £28 each
B+W 58mm = £30 each
67mm = £40 each

SQUARE
Cokin P series: £12 each
Lee: Resin = £60 each
Polyester B/W set = £35 (set of three)

Filters for...

Portraits

Diffusers and soft focus filters

with filter

without filter

In most fields of photography, ultimate sharpness is something to strive for, but portraiture is a bit different – who wants to see every pore, pimple and hair follicle on their face as an 8x10in photograph? Few women do for starters! In the golden age of Hollywood, photographers used to stretch a piece of stocking over their lens to soften the image and give the highlights a romantic glow. While that technique still works today, there are a few drawbacks.

A better way is to use soft focus or diffuser filters. These are clear so you'll lose no light or suffer no colour casts, but feature a surface pattern that acts to diffuse the light passing through, thereby achieving a soft focus effect. This should not be confused with a picture being out of focus; soft focus looks quite different – the underlying image is still sharp.

How they work

The classic Zeiss Softar range, as favoured by generations of wedding photographers, feature a series of evenly spaced raised dimples, while the popular Cokin diffusers feature varying degrees of light frosting on the surface. They all have the same goal – softening harsh detail without affecting exposure – but produce slightly different effects. The results also vary according to the lens aperture used, with wider apertures producing more pronounced effects.

A variation is the centre-spot diffuser, which has a clear, undiffused spot in the middle to leave a central area of the image unaffected. This area becomes more defined relative to the diffused part as you stop down your aperture, and so is best used in conjunction with a wide aperture.

Alternatives

Smear a tiny spot of Vaseline onto a clear UV/skylight filter, or experiment with clear cellophane sweet wrappers, clingfilm, or, yes, stockings. Alternatively, you can wait until you get home and do it using Photoshop by creating a duplicate layer, adding Gaussian Blur and blending it with the original layer.

Sample Prices

ROUND
Hoya Softener A/B: 58mm = £35
67mm = £50
B+W Zeiss Softar VI 58mm = £140
67mm = £160

SQUARE
Cokin P series Diffuser: £14
Lee Soft focus set (Polyester) = £35 (set of three)

Filters for...

Long Exposures

Blocking light

Neutral Density filters are tinted grey, like those 1970s smoked glass coffee tables. They work by reducing the amount of light coming through the lens, without introducing any unwelcome colour shift.

Why not just stop down the lens? Well, you could, but say you want a very long shutter speed to create a motion blur effect, but the light is so bright that even at the smallest aperture your shutter speed still isn't long enough. Or maybe you're doing an outdoor portrait with fill-in flash and you want to shoot at full aperture to blur the background, but this sends the shutter speed above the maximum flash sync speed. In these cases, a Neutral Density (ND) filter can save the day.

How they work

ND filters are especially popular for introducing motion blur to shots of moving water (waterfalls, coastal tides, etc) which can only be done at long shutter speeds. They come in various strengths, blocking out one, two or three stops of light, and you can combine them to block out even more, if needed. You can buy them in round screw-thread or square sheet formats, and you can also get them as grads, so only half the image is affected (ideal for darkening skies without affecting the foreground). These are in fact much more popular than solid ND filters (covered in depth in last month's issue). To use an ND filter, simply fit it over the lens and meter through it.

Alternatives

A polarising filter will block out about two stops of light and improve your colour saturation to boot.

Sample Prices

ROUND

Hoya ND 2/4/8: 58mm = £20 each; 67mm = £28 each

B+W ND 0.3/0.6: 58mm = £30 each; 67mm = £40 each

SQUARE

Cokin P series ND 2/4/8: £12 each

Lee: resin = £60 each; Polyester ND set = £35 (set of three)

Filters for...

Colour Enhancements

Introducing dramatic colours to images

ND grads may be good for darkening skies but what if you want to make it a dramatic colour? Graduated filters come in a wide range of shades, so if you want a purple sky, or an orange one, there's probably a grad out there for you. Grads can also be used upside down to colour a foreground without affecting the upper part of the frame. A green grad, for example, can add saturation to grass. The most popular grads feature warm orange hues to create sunset effects, with arguably the most famous of these being the Tobacco grad, which became a cliché back in the 1980s through its overuse. Sunset filters on the other hand are dark orange at the top and a paler shade at the bottom, to reflect the fact that with real sunsets the ground is also warmed up too.

How they work

First, a word of caution: using a sunset filter at 2 o'clock in the afternoon will not fool anyone into thinking you've captured a real sunset. The sun would be in the wrong place, the shadows would be wrong, and the result would most likely be, well, a bit ropey. A blue grad would be a better choice.

Most grads work best towards dawn or dusk, to enhance a sky that already has some colour in it. A sunset filter can dramatically enhance a real but lacklustre sunset, with other grads, such as purple, producing great effects at the beginning and end of the day too.

To use grads, it's best to meter without them in place, or fit them and take a meter reading from a foreground area unaffected by the grad. Assuming you're using square grads rather than screw-in ones (which you should be) you can move the filter up and down in the holder according to where the horizon sits in your shot.

Remember that the smaller your aperture the more pronounced the line between coloured and uncoloured parts of the filter will be.

Both Cokin and Lee produce both soft and hard-edged grads to account for this. Soft-edged grads are best for small aperture shots such as for landscapes, or scenes where the horizon is not a straight, sharp line – such as a treeline.

Sample Prices

Cokin P series: £14 each
Lee: resin = £50 each;
resin colour grad sets = £85
(various sets of three)

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contact **wdchelpfile@ipcmedia.com** with your questions

Your technical problems, whether on shooting or editing, are answered by our experts in these pages

Virtual image processing

Judy Clark

From: Bucks

I've heard of this thing called Virtual image processing, which sounds interesting but I have no idea of how it works. Could you explain it for me?

In Aperture now, metadata files accompany the original image file, hold the information of the edits, and apply the changes virtually

Martin Evening replies: Imagine you could edit a digital photograph and make a poster-sized print, but without actually opening or altering the original image file? This may sound preposterous, but lots of photographers are doing this right now without realising it whenever they work with one of the latest Raw image editing programs such as Adobe Lightroom or Aperture from Apple. In the past, Capture One, Raw Shooter and Adobe Camera Raw have allowed us to edit Raw images. But the main difference with Lightroom and Aperture is that you can now use these programs as complete digital photography workflow tools to manage, edit, print and save as a web gallery, but without editing the pixels in the original files.

What is interesting about Lightroom and Aperture is that we now have a form of editing where the image edits are all saved as a series of instructions using metadata files known as 'sidecars' using the .xmp file format. These files accompany the original image file and hold the information of the edits, and apply the changes virtually, or when the file is exported to another format.

These are early days, but already in Lightroom, I can select an image, change the white balance, adjust the exposure and shadows, sharpen the photograph, reduce any noise and remove blemishes. All without physically changing the pixels in the original file. In many cases this is all I need to do to a picture before making a finished print. In the not too distant future it may be possible to do even more complex retouching.

With Lightroom, the image capture file is treated as if it is the 'negative image' and always preserved in its original form. And just like film negatives, you have the freedom to interpret a digital negative any way you like.

Now, at present you do still need to export photos from Lightroom to do any kind of extensive image editing in Photoshop. But the trend we are seeing is towards a form of image processing that doesn't require creating master image files from the originals.

So what do we call this new way of working? There have been several suggestions, such as: 'virtual image processing', 'metadata image editing' or 'instruction-based editing'. None of these terms is particularly elegant, so I don't see any of them catching on just yet, but once you

> ...image edits are saved as a series of instructions

can understand the fundamental concept of how it works, you'll appreciate why photographers like myself are all fired up by the limitless potential this can bring to the way we work with our digital photos. Let me give you an example of what I mean. At home I have accumulated several tens of thousands of photographs on my main computer hard drive that are stored as Raw file format captures. I have always had the opportunity to use Raw processing software like Adobe Camera Raw that comes with Photoshop (and now Lightroom), to edit those Raw master photos. Just a few months ago Adobe released the Adobe Camera Raw 4.1 update for Camera Raw and Lightroom 1.1. With this update I now have access to improved noise reduction, sharpening and other new controls like a Clarity adjustment that can be used to enhance localised, midtone contrast. This means I now have the opportunity to revisit any of the Raw photos in my photo library and reprocess them using these new Raw processing tools. In other words, as the Raw processing software gets better you have the opportunity to improve the image quality of the photos in your image archives.

READER QUESTIONS

The experts help you with your technical woes

The Only Way Is Up

Gary Stannard

From: Newcastle

I've just got back from a short holiday in Barcelona and have discovered that most of the upright shots of the city I attempted with my Canon compact suffer from what can best be described as 'leaning building syndrome'. Is there a way I can correct this or do I just have to live with pictures that make me feel slightly queasy when viewing them?

Nigel replies: *It sounds like you have a problem with converging verticals Gary, familiar to anyone who has attempted architectural photography. But don't panic – it can be corrected without the need to shell out for the full Photoshop package or expensive lenses. In fact, Elements has a Perspective feature – choose* ***Image > Transform > Perspective****. You'll be asked if you'd like to make your picture a layer so that transformations can be applied. Hit 'OK' and small boxes will appear at the edges and corners of your image, which allow you to alter perspective by dragging them outwards. Simply continue dragging until you're back on the straight and narrow. If you don't trust your own eyes you can make things even easier by calling up a display grid for reference, via* ***View > Grid****.*

Spot The Difference

Pamela Sanderson

From: London

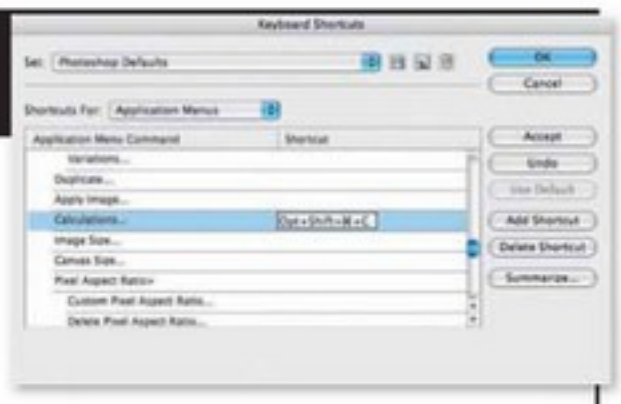
I really love portrait photography but find that my camera flash is a little too harsh and unflattering – revealing my subjects' every spot and wrinkle. I've done my best with a few Photoshop corrections, but it's easy to overdo it and end up with results a little 'plastic'. Is there a way I can achieve a more flattering result 'in camera' and avoid hours on the PC?

Matt replies: *With trends in portrait photography having shifted toward naturalism, turning off your flash entirely and attempting to create images utilising available light can produce more pleasing – and certainly less harsh – results. You don't need a complicated set-up either: daylight filtered through some net curtains can make for very flattering portraits and won't cost you a penny.*

Ask Adobe

Got a question on Photoshop or Elements? Ask Adobe's imaging guru Terry Steeley

Fast Calculations



Paul Simpson

From: Manchester

I use the Calculations command countless times a day. Is there any way to add a keyboard shortcut to this tool?

Terry Steeley replies: Yes, you can! With Adobe Photoshop open, either from the application menu select **Edit > Keyboard Shortcuts** or choose **Window > Workspace > Keyboard Shortcuts & Menus**. Both of these methods will access the same window. If this is your first visit to the Keyboard Shortcuts & Menus dialogue, the Set drop-down menu will display Photoshop Defaults. Click on Create New Set (the middle button) and when prompted name the set, and click Save. Do not change the default location where Photoshop wants to store this file. The Set menu now displays your newly saved set of Keyboard Shortcuts and we can now begin to customise them.

The **Calculations** command is located under the Image menu, so click on the arrow pointing right towards the Image option and scroll down the list of tools until you see Calculations. By clicking on the Calculations entry in the Application Menu Command listing you will see that the shortcut box is now activated, but is empty. By pressing a unique keyboard combination of keys using any combination of Command, Alt, Shift and a letter you can create your new keyboard shortcut for Calculations. If you choose a combination of keys that are in use with another feature, Photoshop will warn you. Click Accept to acknowledge the keyboard shortcut and click Save (top left) to update the set. To finish, click OK. To create a print-out of your shortcuts, just click on Summarize and save a text file containing all of the application shortcuts to your desktop.

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Safari, So Good

Jonathan Steer
From: Carlisle

I'm lucky enough to be heading off on a safari holiday in a couple of months and realise I desperately need to update my kit to get the kind of results I'm after. I'll obviously need a good telephoto lens (or two) but, having shelled out on the trip, I don't want to spend a king's ransom. Can you recommend a good budget option for my Canon EOS?

Nigel replies: *You'll not only want a decent focal range but ideally also some form of image stabilisation – whether a tripod, or in the case of Canon, built into the optic itself. Pro wildlife photographers like Steve Bloom favour the likes of the Canon EF 300mm f/2.8 IS or even the 500mm f/4, but Sigma and/or Tamron do a couple of budget 100-300mm alternatives. Take a look at the likes of the Sigma 100-300m f/4 EX DG IF HSM for around £800 if you don't want to compromise on quality. A wide maximum aperture to allow for a fast shutter speed for those leaping leopards (or charging rhinos) is a consideration worth keeping in mind.*

Backlight Bias

Hannah Bi
From: Bristol

I find I get the most evocative results shooting pictures at the end of the day when the daylight is at its most golden, but often that means I'm shooting against the sun. While silhouetted subjects can look dynamic at times, I'm losing most of the detail. What can I do to find a compromise?

Paul replies: *Have you tried overriding any auto settings, manually activating your camera's flash and using it as a fill-in? You'll highlight your subject's shadow detail without the bleaching effect you might otherwise get when the light is less strong – delivering a more even and effective exposure.*

MATT EXPLAINS

Feeling out of focus? Matt Golowczynski helps out

What Is Depth Of Field?

Jayne Jackson
From: Redhill

I keep hearing talk of 'depth of field' being one of the most important techniques in a photographer's arsenal, but like the offside rule it's one nobody has satisfactorily explained to me. Can you succeed where others have failed?

Matt replies: *We'll try Jayne. Depth of field refers to the zone of sharp focus that extends in front of and beyond the subject focused on, with the area one-third in front and two-thirds behind the subject in focus. An image with almost every element in sharp focus is therefore said to have a wide depth of field; and conversely, a shot that is mostly out of focus except for a sliver of the subject itself is said to have a narrow depth of field.*

You can influence depth of field in several ways; the closer you are to your subject, inevitably the shallower it will be – while your choice of lens also has an effect. Lenses with longer focal lengths produce a narrower depth of field than their shorter counterparts, where you want to throw the background out of focus. The most common way of altering your depth of field is with your aperture, with wider apertures creating a shallow depth of field and smaller ones producing a wider one.

Close-up subjects including flowers suit a narrow depth of field, while it can also be used to isolate a subject in a crowd or for macro work. Alternatively, if shooting a landscape or cityscape you'll want most of it to be in focus, so a wide lens that will get the whole scene in the frame together with a wide depth of field is the best option.

Something to bear in mind is that the aperture you choose will affect the shutter speed you will be able to use. The wider the aperture is, the more light is able to enter, and therefore a shorter shutter speed is needed. For more depth of field where hand-holding the camera is not possible, you can either use a tripod for extra stability or, providing your camera or lens has some form of it, image stabilisation. Depending on the system used, this will, on average, allow you to use two to four shutter stops lower than you would normally be able to use.

READER PICTURES

Your pictures judged by Martin Evening

Evening Class

Photographic author and Photoshop guru Martin Evening passes his verdict on a selection of your photographs

Betws-y-Coed

Steve Gill

From: Manchester

This was taken overlooking Betws-y-Coed in Wales, using a neutral density grad filter. I only had to wait around 30 minutes until I got the shot I planned – the sun broke through the clouds and the light moved across the hills until it lit the small copse of trees in the middle field, picking out the top of the wall in the foreground. Ten minutes later, the light had gone and the rain started once again.

CAMERA: Canon 20D
LENS: Canon 17-40mm
EXPOSURE: 1/8sec

Since replaced by Canon's EOS 30D model, the 20D offered an 8MP sensor and 5fps burst rate.

MARTIN'S CLONE STAMP FIX

I do admire the way Steve took care to use a neutral density grad filter to darken the sky in-camera, and Cokin has had a long-established reputation for making professional quality special effects filters. With regards to the composition, I don't think the wall in the foreground is helping here. If the wall was straight to the camera, it could have worked, but instead I find it rather distracting. In this adjusted version of the picture, I have cropped most of the wall and used the clone stamp to copy the grass to hide the remaining section of the wall.

The Red Arrows

Charley Coleman

From: Middlesex

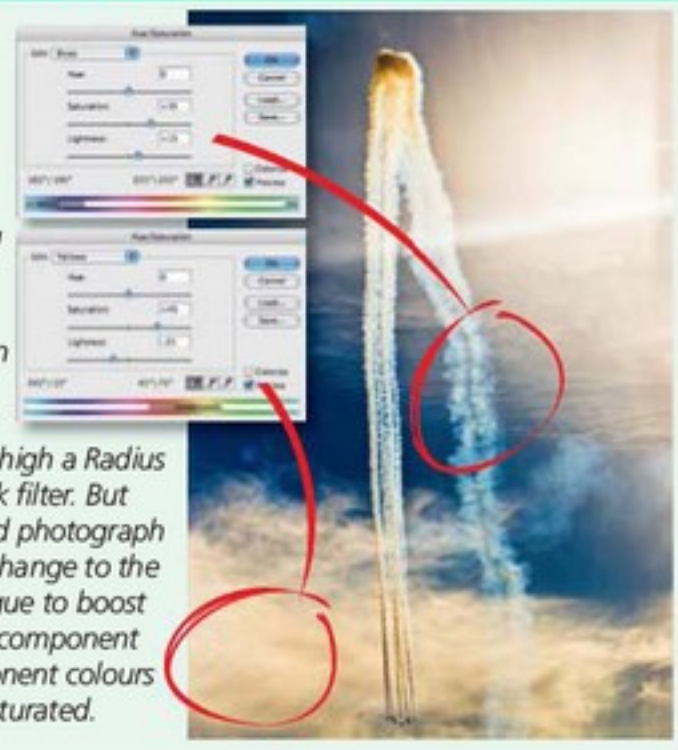
Out of the eight lenses that I own, seven are pre-digital and only one of these is an autofocus lens. The reasons behind my collection of old glass are both economic and photographic. Here is a photograph shot with one of my archaic lenses, which, I think, aptly demonstrates why I love old glass.

CAMERA: Pentax *ist DS
LENS: A 70-210mm
EXPOSURE: 1/4000 sec

Upon its release, the Pentax *ist DS was one of the lightest and most compact DSLRs available.

MARTIN'S LIGHTNESS FIX

I don't think there is any doubt that the latest digital lenses do let you take sharper pictures than older ones can manage, but you know, even in my camera kit collection I have a few lesser-quality lenses that I sometimes use whenever I wish to travel light. And to be honest, if you are not enlarging the pictures too big and you use the best sharpening mehods you can still get good pictures using these. But the sharpening can be critical and in my view, I think Charley may have used too high a Radius setting when applying the Unsharp mask filter. But this is a small niggle, really. This is a good photograph as it is, but I did want to show a minor change to the colours. I used the Hue/Saturation dialogue to boost the lightness and saturation of the Blue component colours and adjusted the Yellows component colours to make the yellows darker and more saturated.



Jillian Xenia

From: Canada

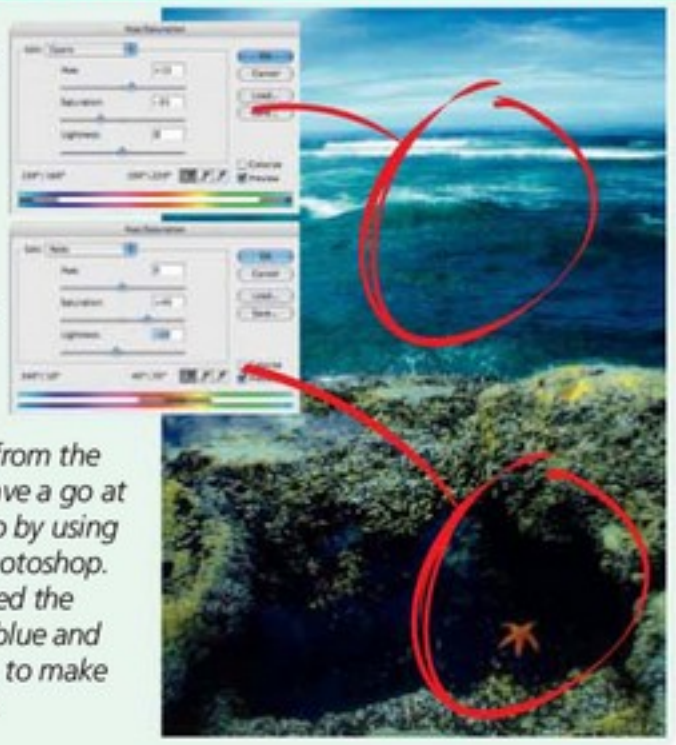
I am a 16-year-old student looking to pursue a career in photography. This picture is titled 'Hidden Treasures' and was taken in Cannon Beach, Oregon. The starfish looked so beautiful against the ocean rocks and sky – I had to snap it!

CAMERA: Canon 400D
LENS: 18-55mm kit
EXPOSURE: 1/80sec

Canon's EOS 400D is still one of the most popular DSLRs – despite some tough opposition.

MARTIN'S HUE/SATURATION ADJUSTMENT FIX

The composition in this photograph is very strong and Jillian has made use of the wideangle lens setting to capture a dramatic view, but from a technical viewpoint the shadow detail has been compromised. It could be that the camera exposure should have been opened up a little more to expose for the shadows or that the camera was unable to manage the wide dynamic range from the highlights to the shadows. I did have a go at modifying the colours in the photo by using a Hue/Saturation adjustment in Photoshop. In the example shown here, I shifted the cyan colours to make them more blue and increased the lightness of the reds to make the starfish stand out a little more.



Fast Supper

Chad Coombs

From: Canada

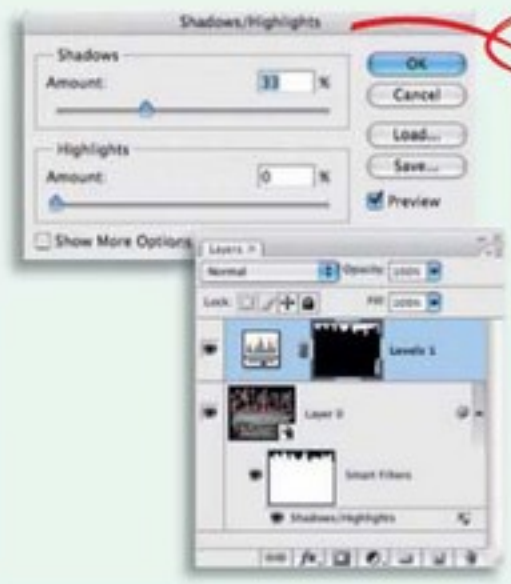
I'm 24 and have had a camera in my hand for as long as I can remember. This is my version of the Last Supper – a self-portrait. Fifteen photos were strategically taken using the timer mode and with the camera on a tripod. Appropriate sections were then deleted to allow the overlapping of limbs and sense of dimension, to allow the perception of it being plausible.

CAMERA: Canon EOS 20D
LENS: Canon 17-40mm
EXPOSURE: 1/125sec

Now discontinued, Canon's 20D has since been replaced by the semi-pro 30D model.

MARTIN'S SHADOWS AND HIGHLIGHTS FIX

This is an astonishingly good photomontage. Technically there is very little wrong with it, but above all, I really do like the concept and wordplay in the title. I did, however, notice that the black background was not as solid as it should be. When inspected closely, I could see some uneven paintwork in the backdrop area. You do have to watch out for this because some print processes will reveal more detail in the shadows than you will be able to see on a monitor. There were just two things that I did here to improve the image: I applied a Smart Object Shadows/Highlight adjustment to bring out a little more detail in the darker shadows, before adding a darkening Levels adjustment layer and painting selectively to send the backdrop to black.



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Adobe Photoshop Elements 5.0 is the market-leading consumer photo-editing and management software. It boasts groundbreaking features and a user-friendly interface. Visit **www.adobe.co.uk**

Turn to page 162 for full details on how best to submit your pictures

What Digital Camera
The World's Smallest DSLR!
10 Really useful tips
Getting to grips with apertures
PLUS: Fujifilm S5700 • Sony H9 • Panasonic FX100 and loads more

What Digital Camera Techniques Take That! Britain

Back in the September issue we challenged you to shoot your Best of Britain photos using our tips... here are the best

Graham Peers

From: London

This shot of Perch Rock Lighthouse in Birkenhead was one of a series taken back in April during a night out with friends. It was about half an hour till sunset, so there was a good sidelight with the tide right out. Setting up my tripod in front of the rock pool, I used a polarizing filter for maximum reflection, a warm up to bring out a bit of colour in the sky and a neutral density grad to balance the tones in the reflection. I used my Fujifilm S9500 set to chrome film and cloudy white balance modes, again to enhance the colour.

What Digital Camera WINNER!

CAMERA: Fujifilm S9500
EXPOSURE: 1/15sec f/3.8

The S9500 boasted a Super CCD sensor and 10.7x optical zoom, together with a tilting LCD

Val Kressman

From: Wales

I bought a digital SLR just over a year ago and thoroughly enjoy taking pictures of the local landscape of Snowdonia, flowers and wildlife. Industrial architecture is another great interest of mine, and I am a regular visitor to the local Slate Museum in Llanberis. This particular image was taken from Llyn Padarn, looking towards Snowdon mountain, late one evening when the sun emerged after a dull day.

CAMERA: Canon 350D
LENS: Sigma 17-70
EXPOSURE: 1/60sec f/10

An 8MP sensor featured on Canon's EOS 350D, which has now been replaced by the 400D

Derek Gristle

From: Sussex

Photography has long been a passion of mine and recently I treated myself to a Nikon D80, which is a fantastic camera and has reignited my interest in the hobby. This particular image was taken in Stanmer Park in Sussex where if you go exploring deep enough, you stumble upon a set of quintessentially English cottages.

CAMERA: Nikon D80
LENS: 18-135mm
EXPOSURE: 1/500sec

See what we thought of Nikon's D80 in our DSLR group test on page 40

Can you TAKE THAT?

You could win a Joby Gorillapod SLR-Zoom!

All you need to do is read our free monthly technique pull-out, then send us your best picture on that theme. This month it's **Autumn Landscapes**, so get shooting. If your picture triumphs you'll win a fabulous (and extremely useful) Gorillapod SLR zoom.

Weighing less than 250g, it's strong enough to hold a DSLR with a decent zoom lens. Not only can it be used as a mini tripod, but thanks to its unique design it can also be wrapped around trees, railings or whatever is to hand – perfect for long exposures.

*Submit up to three pictures on the **Autumn Landscapes** theme by **Monday 8th October**. For submission guidelines and address details see page 162.*

TAKE THE Photoshop Challenge

One image mixed up in Photoshop; there are no rules... that's the challenge

Fancy yourself as a bit of a Photoshop whizz or a PaintShop pro? Whatever your favoured software, individual style or level of ability, we want to see what you can do.

Enter the Photoshop Challenge and you could win a copy of the fantastic new Adobe Lightroom 1.0 software.

Download the images now from our website and if the Editor likes what he sees, you could be appearing in next month's issue of WDC.

THE IMAGE WE GAVE YOU

DAISIES
A pretty ordinary little image that seems to have got your creative juices flowing

What Digital Camera WINNER!

James Carroll

From: Exeter

First I looked at the image and thought it looked quite bland. I then decided it would look more interesting and dramatic as a night scene.

To create the image, I desaturated it first. Then I made the midtones darker using Curves to create a darker effect while still keeping the highlights intact. Then I placed a picture of the moon on a new layer.

To make the moon look more intense and realistic, I created a new layer behind it with an ellipse the same size as the moon. I then added an outer glow effect to this layer. Finally, I took the original image and placed it on a new layer behind the moon and changed the blending mode to colour, so the image was no longer monotone but looked like a realistic night scene.

OUR VERDICT

By removing the bright sunny look of the original you've changed the mood completely, with the moon adding to the effect nicely. An excellent example of what can be done in just a few easy steps.

Matt Northam

From: Norfolk

I began by adding several adjustment layers and picking out different areas from each one, where I thought they worked with the image I wanted to create (a darker, distorted version of the original which still held the fresh feel of the original). I then altered the piece with displacement filters and by cutting and pasting random lasso selections. I then topped that off with some more adjustments before adding a couple of shape layers. There were also a few illustrations and photos that I scanned in before toying with blending modes. I think it's more of an artistic approach rather than a straight photo edit and I'm very happy with the result.

OUR VERDICT

And you should be happy! Definitely the most abstract of the entrants. By throwing other images and layer effects into the mix you've created a visually stimulating piece – well done!

Roger Trinder

From: Birmingham

My entry for Photoshop Challenge is 'Where They Come From'. It shows Pixies bringing daisies protected in bubbles to earth for all to enjoy. To create the image I used Photoshop CS3 Extended. For the effects I used the plug-in Alien Skin Eye Candy 5: Impact-Glass filter to create the bubbles, then I used Alien Skin Eye Candy 5: Impact-Motion Trail filter to get the fade effect and the SS Pixies Brush. I finished off using the Clone Source in CS3 Ext to get the different bubbles, daisies and pixies.

OUR VERDICT

Clap your hands! CLAP YOUR HANDS! A simple enough approach using filters has created a rather surreal take on the challenge this time round.

NEXT MONTH'S Photoshop Challenge

To participate, simply download the high-resolution JPEG file from our website, manipulate it in any way you like (using any photo-editing software) and send it to us. You can combine it with other images, as long as you don't breach anyone's copyright (ie, all pictures are either yours or used with permission).

www.whatdigitalcamera.com/downloads

OUR EXAMPLE

He came from another dimension!

In this example WDC used layer masks and filters to make an inter-dimensional slob appear at a college campus.

Here's a quick example of what can be done with an image like this. Instead of concentrating on the forefront, I decided to create some activity behind the building. I cut the man out before placing him on a new layer, then used layer masks to make his hand hang over the roof and finally created the vortex behind him, by playing around with filters and gradients. Quick, simple and a bit of fun.

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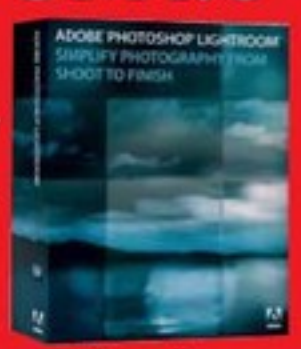

Email your entry as a JPEG file to: wdc@ipcmedia.com, marked 'Photoshop Challenge'. Closing date Monday 8th October

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D80	CF-D80	EN-EL3e	HL-EL3e	MH-18	MH-19	EH-5	SC-28	ML-L3	MC-DC1	BM-7	AS-15	MB-D80	DR-6	DG-2	Correction Lens	UC-E4	EG-D100
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D200	EN-EL3e	MB-D200	AS-10	EH-6	MH-18A	MH-19	CF-D200	BM-6	DK-21	DK-21M	DG-2	DK-7	DR-6	DK-5	MC-35	MC-36	SC-28
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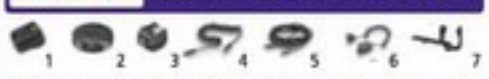

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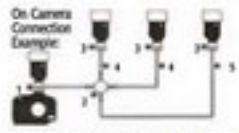

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EOS 5D	BG-E4	BP511	CAPS 400	CB-5L	CA 570	CB 570	RS80N3	TC80N3	LC 5	Angle Finder C	EPEX 15	Rubber Frame Eb	Dioptrics	Eyecup EB	Focus Screen Ee-D,E	WFT-E1	EREA1
	£145.99	£54.99	£89.99	£39.99	£55.00	£29.00	£39.99	£99.99	£329.99	£149.99	£17.91	£5.98	£8.49	£5.98	£25.99	£779.99	£114.99
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	£99.99	£89.99	£299.99	£29.00	£39.99	£99.99	£329.99	£149.99	£24.99	£19.99	£9.99	£25.99	£649.99	£599.99	£21.00	£19.99	£29.99
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OLYMPUS E-SYSTEM

E-400

10.0 million pixels

E-400 One of the worlds smallest D-SLRs on the market

This model features a newly-developed 10.0 million pixel CCD for incredible imaging performance and a large 2.5" LCD to view results easily. Four Thirds technology compatible.

E400 BODY + 14-42mm	£379 or £15 mth
E400 BODY + 14-42mm + 40-150 mm	£479 or £15 mth

E-410

10.0 million pixels

new

Extremely compact digital SLR cameras with Live Preview

This new D-SLR is compact and light-weight, yet provides photographers with the additional comfort of a Live View viewing, so you can use the large 2.5"/6.4cm HyperCrystal LCD to frame your shots easily. Also new is the image processing engine, which boasts superb noise performance and speeds up overall processing times. Moreover, the new 10-Megapixel image sensor means even better-quality, more detailed shots. Furthermore, it is equipped with the patented Supersonic Wave Filter, the original proven technology for protecting the image sensor from dust.

E-510

10.0 million pixels

new

E410 BODY + 14-42mm lens	£499 or £21 mth
E410 BODY + 14-42 + 40-150mm Twin lens Kit	£599 or £25 mth
E510 BODY + 14-42mm lens	£599 or £25mth
E510 BODY + 14-42+ 40-150mm Twin Kit	£699 or £28 mth

PENTAX K100D Super

6.31 million pixels

Take it to the next level with the new K100D Super Digital SLR

With full compatibility with SDM lenses, PENTAX brings you a technologically advanced SLR at a very affordable price. Featuring Shake Reduction, the PENTAX K100D Super offers a 2.5 inch LCD monitor with 210,000 pixel resolution, friendly Mode Dial featuring Auto Picture and Picture modes as well as new Scene modes for even simpler photography.

K100D SUPER + 18-55MM	£389.00 or £17 mth
K100D SUPER + 18-55MM/50 - 200	£529.99 or £23 mth

PENTAX K10D

10.0 million pixels

K10D BODY ONLY	£469 or £20 mth
K10D BODY + 18-55mm KIT	£490 or £22 mth
K10D BODY + 18-55mm + Battery Grip	£599 or £24 mth
K10D BODY + 18-55mm + 50-200mm	£659 or £28 mth
K10D BODY + TAMRON 17-35mm	£699 or £29 mth
K10D BODY + 16-45mm	£799 or £33 mth

FUJIFILM S5 PRO

6.2 million pixels

Fujifilm proudly announce the FinePix S5 Pro, the keenly-awaited successor to the acclaimed FinePix S3 Pro.

Fujifilm's ultimate goal in development of its DSLR cameras has been to maximise image quality through constant research and development. With weatherproof seals, and first-rate design, the S5 Pro will be a camera truly deserving of the term 'workhorse' equally in the studio as on a nature assignment in a rainforest.

S5 PRO BODY ONLY	£960 or £39 mth

SONY α A100

10.2 million pixels

A100 BODY ONLY	£390 or £17 mth
A100 + 18-70mm lens	£429 or £26 mth
A100 + 18-70mm and 75-300mm lens	£599 or £28mth
A100 + 18-200mm lens	£599 or £28 mth

SAMSUNG GX-10

10.0 million pixels

Take a sharper image, with richer colours for a truly compelling composition.

Taking photos is made easier with the PentaPrism viewfinder with its high magnification (0.95x) to provide a clearer, wider field of view (95%) for optimum shooting.

GX-10 BODY + 18-55mm+ 50-200mm lenses	£599 or £25mth

SIGMA SD14

14.0 million pixels

The SD14 uses an innovative, groundbreaking direct image sensor...

Capable of detecting red, green and blue light at every single pixel, with a high image quality from 14 mp sensor

SD14 BODY ONLY	£769 or £34 mth
SD14 + 15-30 EXDG + SANDISK 1GB EXT III CF	£998 or £40 mth

Leica DIGILUX 3

7.0 million pixels

The new Leica D system gives ambitious amateurs and professional photographers a whole new range of possibilities.

The LEICA DIGILUX 3 is the first Digilux camera with an interchangeable lens and therefore forms the basis for the Leica D system, a completely independent digital SLR system. Comes with Leica D 14-50mm ASPH f2.8-3.5 lens.

DIGIUX 3 BODY + 14-50mm APSH f2.8-3.6	£1790 or £42 mth

SIGMA LENSES

70-200mm f2.8 EX DG Macro

HSM EX APO

Four SLD, large aperture zoom lens designed specially for DSLR cameras with close-up capability

new £678.99

17-70mm F2.8-4.5 DC MACRO

ASP. IF

An ideal large aperture standard zoom lens for digital SLR cameras

new £219.99

8mm F3.5 EX DG	£499.99 or £21 mth
14mm F2.8 EX	£531.99 or £23 mth
15mm F2.8 Fisheye DG	£388.99 or £17 mth
20mm F1.8 EX DG	£288.99 or £13 mth
24mm F1.8 EX DG	£239.99 or £10 mth
28mm F1.8 EX DG	£208.99 or £10 mth
30mm F1.4 EX DC HSM	£269.99 or £12 mth
50mm F2.8 EX DG Macro	£190.99 or
70mm F2.8 EX DG Macro	£308.99 or £13 mth
105mm F2.8 EX DG Macro	£274.99 or £12 mth
150mm F2.8 EX DG APO Macro	£423.99 or £19 mth
180mm F3.5 EX DG	£463.99 or £20 mth
300mm F2.8 EX DG	£1523.99or £64 mth
500mm F4.5 EX DG	£2523.99or £106mth
800mm F5.6 APO EX DG	£3793.99or £160 mth
10-20mm F4-5.6 EX DC HSM	£289.00 or £13 mth
12-24mm EXDGF3.5-4.5	£433.99 or £19 mth
15-30mm EXDGF3.5-4.5	£258.99 or £11 mth
17-35mm F4-5.6 Aspherical	£199.99
17-35mm F2.8-4 EX DG Aspherical	£298.99 or £13 mth
17-70mm F2.8-4.5 DC Macro	£219.99 or £10 mth
17-70mm 2.8-4.5 DC Macro HSM Nik	£269.00 or £12 mth
18-50mm F3.5-5.6	£78.99
18-50mm F2.8 EX DC MACRO	£279.00 or £13 mth
18-50mm F28 EX DC HSM Macro Nik	£349.00 or £15 mth
18-125mm F3.5-5.6 DC	£182.99
18-200mm F3.5-6.3 DC	£229.99 or £10 mth
20-40mm F2.8 EX DG SPECIAL OFFER	£229.99 or £11 mth
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24-70mm F2.8 EX DG Macro	£277.99 or £12 mth
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28-135mm F3.8-5.6 IF	£99.95
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50-500mm F4-6.3 EX DG	£749.99 or £30 mth
55-200mm F4-5.6 DC	£93.99
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100-300mm F4 EX IF DG	£748.99 or £32 mth
120-300mm F2.8 APO EX IF HSM DG	£1668.99or £70 mth
135-400mm F4.5-5.6 APO DG	£427.99 or £18 mth
170-500mm F5.6-6.3 APO DG	£527.99 or £22 mth
300-800mm F5.6 EX DG APO SHM	£4069.99or £176mth
1.4x EX DG convertor	£137.99

SIGMA FLASHGUNS AND FILTERS AVAILABLE ONLINE

Tokina LENSES

AF 19-35 f3.5	£129.99
AT-X 100mm f2.8 Macro	£299.99 or £13 mth
AT-X 80-400 f4.5-5.6	£599.99 or £25 mth
AT-X 10-17 f3.5-4.5 Fisheye	£499.99 or £21 mth
AT-X 12-24mm f/4	£349.99 or £15 mth

TAMRON LENSES

AF 11-18mm F4-5.6 Di-II AS IF LD NEW	£349.99 or £16 mth
AF 17-35mm F2.8-4 IF Di	£249.99 or £14 mth
AF 17-50mm F2.8 XR Di II LD ASPH (IF)	£259.99 or £12 mth
AF 18-200mm F3.5-6.3 NEW MODEL	£259.99 or £11 mth
AF 18-250mmF3.5-6.3Di ASPH(IF)Macro NEW	£369.99 or £11 mth
AF 24-135mm F3.5-5.6	£319.99 or £14 mth
AF 28-75mm F2.8 XR Di	£249.99 or £11 mth
AF 28-200mm F3.8-5.6 XR Di ASPH(IF)Macro	£210.00 or £10 mth
AF 28-300mm XR Di LD ASPH Macro IF f3.5-6.3	£199.99
AF 55-200mm f4-5.6 Di II LD Macro	£79.99
AF 70-300mm F4-5.6 Di LD Macro 1:2	£119.99
AF 200-500mm F5-6.3 Di LD	£649.99 or £29 mth
AF 14mm F2.8	£749.99 or £34 mth
AF 90mm Di Macro	£269.99 or £12 mth
AF 180mm F3.5 Di Macro	£519.99 or £23 mth
AFSP 300mm F2.8 Aspherical (IF)	£1999.99or £84 mth

Please state camera mount required when ordering Sigma, Tokina and Tamron Lenses

SONY LENSES

AF 16mm F2.8	£665 or £28 mth
AF 28mm F2.8	£169
AF 50mm F1.4	£279 or £12 mth
AF 50mm Macro (D)	£409 or £19 mth
AF 85mm F1.4	£997 or £42 mth
AF 100mm F2.8 Macro (D)	£599 or £24 mth
AF 135mm F2.8 STF	£1039 or £64 mth
AF 300mm F2.8 G	£4275 or £220mth
AF 500mm F8 reflex	£575 or £24 mth
AF 11-18mm F4.5-5.6	£459 or £20 mth
AF 16-80mm F3.5-4.5 ZA	£549 or £20 mth
AF 18-200mm F3.5-6.3	£349 or £15 mth
AF 75-300mm F4.5-5.6	£175

OLYMPUS LENSES

ZUIKO 8mm F3.5	£519.00 or £50mth
ZUIKO 35mm F3.5	£142.00
ZUIKO 50mm F2.0 macro	£350.00 or £15 mth
ZUIKO 150mm F2.0	£1914.00 or £82 mth
ZUIKO 300mm F2.8	£4770.00 or £200mth
ZUIKO 7-14mm F4	£1179.00 or £50mth
ZUIKO 11-22mm F2.8-3.5	£550.00 or £24 mth
ZUIKO 14-42mm f3.5-5.6	£169.00
ZUIKO 14-45mm f3.5-5.6	£164.00
ZUIKO 14-54mm F2.8-3.5	£449.00 or £19 mth
ZUIKO 18-180mm f3.5-6.3	£331.00 or £14 mth
ZUIKO 35-100mm f2.0	£1605.00 or £67mth
ZUIKO 40-150mm f3.5-4.5	£189.00
ZUIKO 50-200mm F2.8-3.5	£699.00 or £30 mth
ZUIKO 90-250mm F2.8	£3779.00 or £50 mth
EC-14 tele converter	£321.00 or £14 mth
EX-25 extension tube	£99.00

PENTAX LENSES

FA 31mm f1.8 AL	£799.00 or £34mth
FA 43mm f1.9	£399.00 or £17mth
FA 50mm f1.4	£169.00
FA 77mm f1.8	£699.00 or £30mth
SMC 14mm f2.8 DA ED IF	£599.00 or £25mth
SMC 40mm f2.8 DA	£219.00 or £10mth
SMC 10-17mm f3.5/4.5 ED IF	£329.99 or £14mth
SMC 12-24mm f4.8 DA	£629.00 or £27mth
SMC 16-45mm f4 DA ED AL	£309.00 or £13mth
SMC 16-50mm f2.8 DA ED	£529.00 or £20mth
SMC 18-55mm f3.5 - 5.6 DA AL	£179.00
SMC 50-200mm f4 - 5.6 DA ED	£169.00
SMC 50-135mm f2.8 DA ED	£599.00 or £23mth
SMC 50mm f2.8 D FA Macro	£349.00 or £15mth
SMC 100mm f2.8 D FA Macro	£399.00 or £17mth
SMC 21mm f3.2AL	£399.00 or £17mth
SMC 70mm f2.4DA	£449.00 or £19mth

Metz FLASHGUNS

Metz Professional Flashguns

Comprising many different models the Metz flashgun range has a unit for most applications. From the Metz B-5, small enough to fit a compact to the Metz 70 MZ-5 which will adapt to most 35mm system cameras.

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Coiled synch. cables from £11.16

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THE WORLDS FIRST USB TTL FLASHGUN

State-of-the-art secondary reflector technology by Germany's leading industrial designer only £299.

58 AF-1 £280

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£249.99

Lensbabies

Add a creative spark to your repertoire...

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Macro Set £23.50
Lensbabies II £109.00
see website

Hot Award 2008

£69.99

VisibleDust

The Arctic Butterfly™ SL 700 is a great entry DSLR sensor cleaning tool, compact and easily fits into the pocket. Great for the photographer on the move.

new

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NIKON Coolpix

Nikon

P5000 £249 — 3.5x optical zoom — 10.0 million pixels

Coolpix L4	£95	Coolpix S500	£229
Coolpix L11	£119		
Coolpix S200	£179	Nikon FC-E8 Fisheye Converter (fits P5000 Coolpix) was £219.99 Save £90	£129.99
Coolpix 4500	£179		

OLYMPUS Digital

OLYMPUS

SP550 £299 — 18x optical zoom — 7.1 million pixels

FE 210	£95		
FE 230	£129		
FE 240	£169	MJU 770	£249
FE 250	£189	MJU 780	£209

CANON Powershot / IXUS

Canon

G7 £335 +RETRO CASE — 6x optical zoom — 10 million pixels

IXUS 70	£169	Powershot A460	£95		
IXUS 75	£189	Powershot A550	£119	P'shot A570 IS	£179
IXUS 850 IS	£229	Powershot A560	£149	Powershot S3IS	£249
IXUS 900 Ti	£229	Powershot A630	£169	NEW P'shot S5IS	£349
IXUS 950 IS	£259	Powershot A640	£219	Powershot G7	£299

FUJIFILM FinePix

FUJIFILM

F40fd £165 — 3x optical zoom — 6.3 million pixels

FinePix A800	£85	FinePix S5700	£145	FUJI memory cards	
FinePix Z5 fd	£139	FinePix S6500fd	£175	See below for prices	
FinePix F31fd	£135	FinePix S9600	£255		

SONY

SONY

DSC-T50 £269 — 3x optical zoom — 7.2 million pixels

DSC-S650	£99				
DSC-W35	£125				
DSC-W80	£175				
DSC-W90	£219				
DSC-W55	£145	DSC-H7	£289	SONY memory sticks	
DSC-W200	£289	DSC-H9	£339	See our website	
DSC-T20	£219	DSC-N2	£299		
DSC-T100	£289	DSC-G1	£399		

KODAK Digital Cameras

Kodak

Z712 £208 — 12x optical zoom — 7 million pixels

C 613	£63
V 803	£149
Z 710	£199
Z 885	£135

LEICA Lux

C LUX 2	£420
D LUX 3	£490
V LUX 1	£590

SAMSUNG

NV3	£164
NV7	£209
NV11	£209
i7	£199
S730	£99

RICOH Caplio

R5	£199
R6	£229
GR Digital	£389
GX 100	£349

CASIO Exilim

EX Z75	£149
EX S770	£199
EX V7	£249
EX Z1050	£189
EX Z1200	£239

PENTAX Optio

E40	£89
M30	£149
W30	£229
T30	£229
A30	£249

CANON Camcorders

Canon — The ultra compact HV10 benefits from Canon HD CMOS imaging. Shooting widescreen 2.96MP HDV1080i, the HV10 features 10x optical zoom, Instant AF & DIGIC DV II for HD.

HV10 £599
HV20 NEW £729

Canon — 2.2 Megapixel CCD, vivid video is captured straight to DVD (-R/-RW/-R DL). Canon's RGB Primary Colour Filter employs split processing paths to ensure colours remain vibrant for both video and photos.

DC19 £359

Canon — 35x optical zoom Megapixel camcorder ready for true widescreen video. User-friendly controls include Canon's Quick Start and a Joystick interface. Includes 5 FREE DV Tapes

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MD160 £249

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HD-HDD	SD1E	£844
HD-DVD	DX1	£760
SDR	H250	£519

JVC HDD HD

HDD	MG575	£749
HDD	MG155	£499
HDD	MG130	£399
MiniDV	D720	£195

SONY HD HDD

Incredibly small 1080i HD camcorder with ClearVid CMOS Sensor. It records up to 2 hours 55min (with 8GB) of AVCHD movie on removable Memory Stick media.

HD DVD HDRCX6 £799

SONY DV

An extremely compact MiniDV Handycam® with 2.5" LCD screen, Carl Zeiss® lens and a market leading 40x Optical Zoom. Includes 5 FREE DV Tapes!

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Lexar

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1GB	£12.99	2GB	£22.99	2GB	£28.99	4GB	£65.99
2GB	£21.99	4GB	£39.99	4GB	£46.99	8GB	£126.99
4GB	£37.99	8GB	£78.99	8GB	£90.99		
				12GB	£136.99		
				16GB	£181.99		
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512MB	£7.99	1GB	£11.99	1GB	£15.99		
1GB	£9.99	2GB	£19.99	2GB	£24.99		
2GB	£17.99						

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512MB	£19.99
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4GB	£50.99
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2GB	£36.99

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1GB	£18.99
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Mutli Card Readers USB 2.0	
Multi Card Reader	£24.99

Kingston

Compact Flash	
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Elite-Pro C-F	
1GB	£12.99
2GB	£21.99
4GB	£49.99
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2GB	£45.99
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Elite-Pro Secure Digital	
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2GB	£19.99
Secure Digital Ultimate	
2GB	£27.99

FUJIFILM Memory Cards

MEMORY CARDS

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2GB	£26.99	Micro SD		4GB	£47.99
Secure Digital		512MB	£6.99	Compact Flash x100	
1GB	£7.99	1GB	£9.99	1GB	£18.99
2GB	£26.99	Compact Flash x20		2GB	£33.99
Secure Digitalx60		512MB	£8.99		
512MB	£8.99	1GB	£10.99		
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OLYMPUS

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EPSON Storage

PORTABLE STORAGE

P-3000

Store, manage and share your photos and movies with these compact multimedia viewers.

P-3000	40GB	£299.99
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JOBO Portable Storage

PORTABLE STORAGE

JOBO Giga One (LCD screen)

40GB	£99
80GB	£139
120GB	£169
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Giga Vu Pro Evolution

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80GB	£499
120GB	£599
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Car Adaptor	£24.99

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120GB	£279.99	viewing your images.

See Andy Rouse's review online

Canon Storage

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120GBTriple Interface 5400 rpm	£97
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new

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NIKON SOFTWARE

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View Pro	£34.99
Camera Control Pro	£29.99

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C1LEV3.7 (Win)	£69
C1LEV3.7 (Mac)	£69

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MN028B	Trimun Tripod Black	£173.95
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MN055PROB	055PROB Pro Black	£108.00
MN055CL	Classic Chrome	£92.00
MN055CLB	Classic Black	£96.00
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MN190XV	190XV c/w 700 RC2	£140.00
MN190XV	190XV c/w 701 RC2	£160.00
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MN058B	058 Trilast Tripod Black	£189.99
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MN190 X PRO B		£95.00
MN475	475 Pro Geared Tripod	£176.99
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MN679B	Monopod Black	£31.99
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MN680B	Compact Monopod Black	£39.00
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MN488RC0	Midi Ball Head with RC0 System	£59.95
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GT2540G	£510	or £22mth
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GT3530	£495	or £21mth
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new

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GT2931	Tripod with G-LOCK NEW	£255 or £11mth
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G1564	Aluminium	£85
G1564L	Aluminium	£100
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G1504	Tele Studex Tripod	£440 or £19mth
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NGT3540XLS	Studex Tripod Extra Long Version NEW	£575 or £24mth
NGT5530S	Studex Tripod NEW	£550 or £23mth
NGT5540LS	Studex Tripod Long Version NEW	£610 or £26mth
NGT5560SGT	Studex Tripod GIANT Version NEW	£735 or £31mth

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GT2530EX	Explorer Tripod with G-LOCK NEW	£420 or £18mth
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G1277M	£115
G1278M	£145
G1377M	£155
G1378M	£190

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Wt: 20oz	Wt: 20oz
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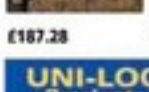

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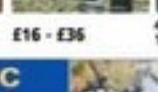

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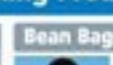

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- A3+ or less
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- A3+ or less
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Size	Sheets	
4 x 6"	20	£5.99
A4	15	£9.99
A3	10	£19.99

Photo Paper Plus Glossy PP101 (270 gsm)		
Size	Sheets	
4x6"	20	£3.99
5x7"	20	£5.99
A4	20	£9.99

Glossy Photo Paper GP401 (190 gsm)		
Size	Sheets	
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A4	20 BOGOF	£5.99
A3	20	£15.99

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- 17ppm B&W
- 8ppm Colour
- A4 / CD's
- 6 Colour ink
- PictBridge

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- 8ppm Colour
- A4 / CD's
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- 17ppm B&W
- 8ppm Colour
- A4 or less
- 8 Colour ink
- Gloss ink

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- 9ppm Colour
- A3+ or less
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RX560

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A3+	50	C13S041340	£39.99

Premium Semigloss Photo Paper (251 gsm)			
Size	Sheets		
A4	20	C13S041332	£12.99
A3	20	C13S041334	£32.99
A3+	20	C13S041328	£39.99

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PLUS Lowepro D-RES8 Case & Fuji 1GB xD Card

As a slightly-slimmed version of the award-winning Fujifilm FinePix F30, the F20 is the perfect pocketable accompaniment on nights out when the memories will really count.

- ISO 100-2000
- Real Photo Technology
- 300 Shots per Battery Charge
- 2.5" LCD Monitor
- 6.3 Million Pixels
- Movie Mode

F20 Camera only.....£99.99

SAVE £45 rrp £249.97 **£119.99**

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PLUS Lowepro D-RES8 Case & Sandisk 1GB Card & Rechargeable Hahnel battery

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- 7.2 Megapixel
- 28mm wide-angle
- 10x optical zoom
- optical image stabilisation

FX07 Camera only.....£149.99

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FUJIFILM FinePix S9600 BUNDLE

S9600 PLUS:
Sandisk 2GB Extreme III CF Card
Fuji Leather Case
CamLink Tripod

Fujifilm's FinePix S9600 is the sort of camera you can take anywhere and get a great shot. Thanks to its huge 10.7x Fujinon optical zoom lens you'll c apture all the action – whether you're shooting details close-up or vast landscapes.

- 9 Megapixel
- 28mm wide-angle
- 10.7x optical zoom

SAVE £50 rrp £349.96 **£299.99**

TRIPODS

Velbon

Sherpa PRO 535 EL and PH157Q head

Carbon fibre tripod, extremely light weight and well made. It also has great features such as low level photographs, foam wrap legs for comfort & clip-lock, graduated legs.

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Sherpa PRO CF635 EL & PH157Q head	£179.99
Sherpa PRO CF545 EL & PH157Q head	£159.99
Sherpa Pro CF435 Tripod & CHD-51Q Magnesium Ball Head	£199.99
Sherpa Pro CF435 Tripod & PHD-41Q 3-Way Head	£189.99
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NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC

Tundra NGTT2 Tripod The perfect companion for all your outdoor digital photography needs.

SAVE £5 rrp £54.99 **£49.99**

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SLIK

Pro-700DX tripod with 4-way head

3 section legs with 4-way pan-head Length closed 76cm. Extended 190cm. 3.2kg. Top section leg diameter 50.2mm Lever lock legs & Gearless center column.

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Manfrotto

055XProB By extending the column to its highest vertical position, it can be swung round to horizontal without removing the head or disassembling the column itself, so switching between framing and positioning setups is more convenient than ever.

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055MF4 Tripod	£207.99
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725B Digi Tripod with Quick Release	£69.99
728B Digi Tripod	£79.99
804RC2 3-Way Head	£54.99
808RC4 Standard 3-Way Head	£89.99

190XPROB

Newly redesigned, the 190XPROB makes the horizontal center column feature even easier to use. Now, by extending the column to its highest vertical position, it can be swung round to horizontal, without removing the head or disassembling the column itself.

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- Wrappable
- Grippable
- Gorilla Fun

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Vertex 100AW Photo Backpack

The Lowepro Vertex 100AW is a durable, professional backpack that holds a pro digital SLR. It includes a lightweight harness with 6 adjustment points for maximum comfort. Two front accessory panels centralize all your digital accessories for quick access.

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NEW!

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The perfect mid-size pack for a wide range of photo equipment.

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Includes Inserttrolly and Laptop Case. Suitable for Hand Luggage on Most Flights

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The special design gives quick, separate access to the camera in the central compartment, while the rest of the equipment surrounding it remains secure.

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The Daily is Crumpler's super-glamour sling bag. It comes in 6 different sizes and 4 different colours. They can be used as photo bags or, if you remove the insert, as a messenger style sling bag.

£59.99

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The Daily DA370 Photo Bag	£69.99
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The Daily DA600 Photo Bag	£89.99
The Daily DA750 Photo Bag	£99.99
Bens Pizza Medium	£12.99
Bens Pizza Small	£9.99
Match Maker Full Photo Backpack	£99.99
Opulent Roorder Half Photo Backpack	£109.99
Pretty Boy Backpack	£69.99
Pretty Boy Laptop Backpack	£79.99
Pretty Boy MAXI 2500 M	£25.99
Pretty Boy MAXI 3000 L	£29.99
Pretty Boy MAXI 4000 XL	£35.99
Pretty Boy MAXI 5500 XXL	£40.99
Pretty Boy MAXI 7500 XXXL	£45.99
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Royal Court Half Photo Backpack	£89.99
Waistbelt for Bruins Hot Tub	£19.99
Worth Shower Half Photo Backpack	£89.99
Zpontivenie Full Photo Backpack	£109.99

Match Maker Full Photo Backpack

The Full Photo Backpacks are for people that have a certain amount of camera gear and need a backpack that holds exactly that amount of stuff.

SAVE £30 rrp £129.99 **£99.99**

NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC

Tundra NGTT2 Tripod The perfect companion for all your outdoor digital photography needs.

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DESIGNED FOR PROFESSIONAL PHOTOGRAPHERS

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1GB ULTRA II	£12.99
2GB standard speed	£12.99
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FUJIFILM

xD	
512Mb XD M/H Card	£11.99
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Ideal for the hobbyist, semi-pro or if you are setting up a small studio, the Kenro "Digi Studio Lighting Kit" comes complete with the following items:

2 x FE SS1308 Flash Heads
2 x FE LS440 Lighting Stands
1 x FE SSM4545 Softbox
1 set of filters FE SSA CF (Red, Blue Green & Yellow)
Camera sync cable.

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Photo Dome

Ideal for catalogue photography, online auction photography, collectables and product photography. Enables you to create your own portable, self-contained, table top lighting studio.

£27.99

PERFECT FOR EBAY & MACRO PHOTOGRAPHY

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1st Sep	Nikon D200 Workshop
2nd Sep	Adobe Elements Seminar (level 1)
2nd Sep	Adobe Elements Seminar (level 2)
8th Sep	Getting the Best Inkjet Prints
8th Sep	Black & White Digital Photography
9th Sep	Getting the best from Canon Speedlite
9th Sep	Working with RAW files seminar

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MAC SENSATION AT THE WAREHOUSE CLUB

Photo Enthusiasts System

HANDS ON Come in and try it out for yourself AT THE WAREHOUSE CLUB

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- Spyder2 Express
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For full details of any of our Mac Photographers solutions, please visit www.digitaldepot.co.uk or call 01438 353706.

► NEW! NEW! NEW! ◄

WATCH THIS SPACE!!

NEW PRODUCT ANNOUNCEMENTS EXPECTED FROM CANON AND NIKON SOON

WACOM PEN TABLETS - SPECIAL OFFER

Enter the world of Intuos in its third generation – Intuos3 gives you more creative freedom, increased efficiency and improved precision than any other professional Wacom pen tablet ever. And it also happens to be the most handsome one yet.

The features of the new Intuos 3 range includes: doubled resolution now 5080 lpi, additon of configurable ExpressKeys on the tablet surface, touch strip on tablet surface similar to notebook touchpads and new ergonomically redesigned pen.

FREE TUTORIAL DVD WITH EVERY TABLET

- WACOM INTUOS 3 A5 ..... £219.00
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- WACOM INTUOS 3 A4 ..... £339.00

MITSUBISHI CP-9550DW

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Everything you need to make your picture look their best and spend more time behind your camera.

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7-14mm F4.0	£1099.99	EC-14 1.4 X	£321.00
11-22mm F2.8-3.5	£549.99	EX-25	£100.00
14-54mm F2.8	£429.00	MF-1	£99.00

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FL-36 Flashgun	£139.00	BN-1 Battery Pack	£129.90
FL-50 Flashgun	£249.00	FC-1 Flash Controller	£278.90
RF-11 RingFlash Unit	£209.90	SW-V1 Flash Set	£419.00
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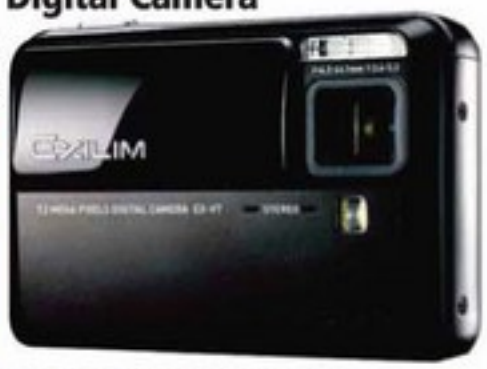

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55mm	£12	£27	£27	£67	£16	£27
58mm	£13	£28	£31	£69	£19	£28
62mm	£18	£32	£41	£79	£22	£32
67mm	£21	£36	£48	£86	£27	£36
72mm	£26	£40	£49	£118	£34	£40
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24-85 F3.5/4.5 . . . . £139
28-70 F3.5/4.5 . . . £69
28-80 F2.8/4 L . . £379
28-80 F3.5/5.6 . . . £49
28-135 F3.5/5.6 . £199
28-200 F3.5/5.6 U . . . £199
35-70 F3.5/4.5 . . . . . £49
35-80 F4/5.6 . . . . . £39
35-350 F3.5/5.6 L . £749
55-200 F4.5/5.6 . . £99
60 F2.8 mac EFS . £189
70-200 F2.8 L U . . £649
70-210 F4 L U £379
70-210 F3.5/4.5 . . . £169
70-300 F4.5/5.6
DO IS U £679
75-300 F4.5/5.6 U IS £279
75-300 U MKIII . . £119
100-300 F5.6 . . . . £99
100-400 F4.5/5.6 U L £949
180 F3.5 L £799
400 F5.6 L £699
500 F4 IS L U M- £3699

SIGMA CAF
17-35 F2.8/4 EX . . £179
18-35 F3.5/4.5 . . . £99
18-50 F2.8 EX . . . £229
18-125 F3.5/5.6 DC £149
24-70 F2.8 EX DG £219
28 F1.8 early £69
28-70 F2.8/4 ASP . £49
30 F1.4 EX M- . . . £229
70-200 F2.8 EX . . £399
70-300 F4/5.6
APO macro DG . . £120
120-300 F2.8
EX DG M- £1249
500 F4.5 EX HSM £1699
1.4x conv £109
2x conv £109

OTHER CAF
TAM 18-200 Di II . £189
TAM 20-40 2.7/3.5 £149
TAM 70-300 F4.5/5.6 £59
TAM 200-500 F5/6.3 £499
TAM 80-210 F4.5/5.6 £49
TOK 17 F3.5 ATX . £149

CANON FLASH
MR14EX £249
300EZ £39
380EX £119
420EZ £49
540 EZ £79
550EX £199

ACCESSORIES
BP50 or BP5 . . . . £39
VG-10 Grip EOS 5 £29
SB-E2 . . . . . £110
PB-E1 . . . . . £99
60 T3 Remote (Fits T90, EOS 1N, 5 etc) £15

CANON FD
F1n plain prism £299/£399
T90 body £149
T50 body £49
F1 b/o £199
A1 b/o V Nice . . . £149
A-1 Body Brassy . £69
AE-1P chr/blk body £79
AE-1 body £49
AV-1 body chr . . . £49
FD 15 F2.8 fisheye £299
24 F2.8 BL £49
28 F2.8 BL £29
FD 28 F2.8 . . . . . £29
FD 35 F2 . . . . . £149
FD 35 F2.8 . . . . . £39
FD 35-70 F4 . . . . £49
FD 35-70 F3.5/4.5 £49
FD 35-105 . . . . . £179
FD 35-105 F3.5/4.5 (58mm Filter Size) £79
FD 50 F1.4 . . . . . £69
FD 50 F1.8 . . . . . £29
BL 50 F1.4 . . . . . £49
BL 50 f1.8 . . . . . £29
FD 50mm F2 . . . . £20
FD 50mm F3.5 Mac £49
FD 70-210 F4 . . . £49
FD 100 F2.8 . . . . £79
FD 100 F4 mac . . £249
FD 100-200 F5.6 . £29
FD 100-300 F5.6 . £149
135 F2.5 BL £39
FD 135 F2.8 . . . . . £79
FD 135 F3.5 . . . . . £29
FD 200 F2.8 . . . . £199
FD 300 F4 . . . . . £249
FD 300 F5.6 . . . . . £49
FD 400 F2.8 L . . £POA
FD 400 F4.5 . . . . £249
2x Extender B . . . £79
Life Size adapt Fits Extension Tube Set M 5, 10 & 20 . . . . . £29
50mm Ext Tube FD £39
Viv ext tube set . . £39
Vivitar Macro Conv £29
Winder A £39
MA drive £69
LC-2 set £99

FLASH GUNS
177A £29
300TL £59

CONTAX SLR
RTSIII £499
RX body box . . . £349
Aria Body scruffy £149
25 F2.8 AE £179
28-70 F3.5/4.5 MM £249
28-85 F3.3/4.4 MM M- £399
35 F2.8 AE £99
35-70 F3.4 MM . . £299
50 F1.4 AE £99
50 F1.7 MM Mint- . £79
50 F1.7 AE £49
80-200 F4 MM box £399
135 F2.8 AE £99
Ext tube set £59
TLA20 flash £39

CONTAX G R/F
G2 black kit £899
90 F2.8 silv £199
TLA200 . . . . . £99

CONTAX COMPACT
T2 M- box £199

ALL DIGITAL

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1DS MKII body . £3799
1D MKII body . . £1600
1DS body no leads/charger . . £1199
20D body £399
10D body £299
350D body £299
300D body £199
D60 body £199
BG-E1 . . . . . £59

FUJI
S2 body £299

LEICA
M8 M- boxed . . . £2349

NIKON
D2X body £1799
D2H body £899
D1X body £469
D100 body £249
D50 body £199
MH-16 . . . . . £139
WT1 trans £149

OLYMPUS
E500 + 14-45 . . . . £349
E500 + 17-45 . . . . £269
40-150 F3.5/4.5 box £149
TC07-14B £69
WC07-0AB £69

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ist DL body box . £199

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Foc scrn/hood GX £199
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H1 50-110 F3.5/4.5 £1499
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503CW Chr + 80 CF + A12 . £1199
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503CX + 80 CF + A12 . . . . . £999
501 C blk + 80 F2.8 C + A12 RFH £899
500CM + 80 CF + A12 . . . . . £799
201F + 80 F2.8 + A12 RFH £999
PME3 prism £179
PME prism £199
PM45 prism £299
PM90 prism £199
45° prism late . . . £179
WLF chr latest . . . £99
A12 latest M- . . . £299
A12 blk latest . . . £249
A12 chr latest . . . £249
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Winder CW box M- £299
PolaPlus back M- £199
Pol Back 100 . . . . £69
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50 F4 CFI M- . . . £999
50 F4 FLE £799
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100 F3.5 CF £499
110 F2 F series . . £499
110 F2.8 FE M- . £679
120 F4 CFI M- . . £999
120 F4 macro . . . £749
120 F5.6 chr . . . £269
150 F4 CFI M- . . £899
150 F4 CFI £749
150 F4 CF boxed £499
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350 F4 FE M- . . £1799
Vivitar 2x conv . . . £99
Ext tube 21 or 55 . £69

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50mm Hood early Blk T* Lens £20
Hood 60-80mm 60D £30
80mm Hood 50mm D £22
100-250mm 60D . . £30

HORIZON
360 Panoramic . . £POA

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R8 Black Box M- . £599
R7 blk body £499
R5 body £299
28-70 F3.6/4.5 . . £549
50 F2 3 cam £299
135 F2.8 3 cam . . £199
R8 winder £149

LEICA M/COMPACT
35 F1.4 early . . . £399
90 F2 . . . . . £479
Minilux £179

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Gossen Lunasix IIIS £89
Minolta 5deg Spot Attachment £49
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645 AF 80 + 120 RFH £699
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MAMIYA 645 MF
645 Pro TL kit £599
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Panoram ada set . £69

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28-85 F3.5/4.5 . . . £99
35-70 F3.5/4.5 . . . £39
35-70 F4 . . . . . £49
35-105 F3.5/4.5 AF £49
50 F1.7 . . . . . £59
70-210 F4.5/5.6 . . £69
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100 F2.8 AFD . . . £399
100-300
F4.5/5.6 APO . . . £219
100-300 F4.5/5.6 . £129
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ACCESSORIES
IR1N set £89
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50 F1.4 PG £39
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F100 body £299
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F60 b/o £49

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18-55 F3.5/5.6 DX . £49
18-70 F3.5/4.5 DX £139
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24 F2.8 AFD M- . . £179
24-50 F3.5/4.5 AFD £99
24-50 F3.5/4.5 . . . £79
24-85 F2.8/4 . . . . £329
28 F2.8 AF £79
28-70 F3.5/4.5 AFD £99
28-85 F3.5/4.5 . . . £99
28-105 F3.5/4.5 D £179
28-200 F3.5/5.6 AFG £199
28-200 F4 AFD . . . £39
55-200 F4.5/5.6 DX £129
70-210 F4 AF £99
70-300 F4.5/5.6 ED £179
75-300 F4.5/5.6 . £139
80-200 F2.8 AFDN £469
80-200 F2.8 AF early £299
85 F1.4 D M- box . £679
100-300 F4.5/6.7 . £59
135 F2 DC AFD . . £499
200-400 F4 G IF ED M- £3299
300 F2.8 AFSII M- £2399
400 F2.8 AFS case £3799
400 F2.8 AFS case £2999
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TC14E boxed . . . £199
TC14EII £229
TC14 . . . . . £140
TC20E boxed . . . £199
TC20EII £219
Teleplus 2x conv . £69

SIGMA NAF
10-20 F4/5.6 EX . . £249
12-24 F4.5/5.6 DG £339
15-30 F3.5/4.5
EX DG £119
17-35 F2.8/4 DG scruffy £139
17-35 F2.8/4 DG box £199
17-35 F2.8/4 EX . . £139
17-70 F2.8/4 . . . £179
20-40 F2.8 EX M- £169
24 F2.8 . . . . . £69
24 F1.8 DG £149
24-70 F2.8 EX DG £219
28 F1.8 early £69
28-70 F2.8 EX . . £139
30 F1.4 EX £229
70-300 F4/5.6 APO £129
80-400 F4.5/5.6 . £599
80-400 F4.5/5.6
OS DG £699
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20-40 F2.7/3.5 . . £229
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SB-27 . . . . . £79
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SB-28DX scruffy . £99
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28 F3.5 AI £79
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35-70 F3.5/4.5 AIS M- £149
35-105 F3.5/4.5 AIS Scruffy £99
50 F1.4 AI £169
50 F1.8 AIS £69
55 F2.8 AIS micro £129
55 F3.5 AI micro . . £99
80-200 F4 AIS . . £149
80-200 F4.5 AIS . . £99
85 F2 AI £129
100 F2.8 E £69
100-300 F5.6 AIS . £149
105 F1.8 AIS . . . £299
105 F2.5 AIS £139/£199
105 F4 AIS mac . £129
135 F2.8 AIS . . . £129
135 F2.8 AI £89
135 F3.5 AI £59
180 F2.8 AIS M- . £349
200 F4 AI £89
200 F4 AIS macro scruffy £299
300 F4 AI £169
TC16A £59
TC200 . . . . . £59
TC300 . . . . . £169
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MD-4 Drive £79
MD-12 Drive £79
MD-14 Drive £79
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135U M- box . . . £POA

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Ext Tube 7 or 14 ea £30
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Viv 28 F2.8 . . . . £29
Viv 28-105 F3.5/4.5 £69

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67 II + AE prism . £999
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75 F4.5 early nice £169
90 F2.8 late £299
90 F2.8 early . . . £149
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100 F4 macro . . . £499
105 F2.4 early . . £149
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150 F2.8 early . . £149
165 F2.8 . . . . . £199
200 F4 Latest M- . £399
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FA 45 F2.8 . . . . . £379
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FA 200 F4 . . . . . £399
FA 300 F5.6 M- . . £499
FA 400 F5.6 . . . . £899
Ext tube set £199

PENTAX 645 MF
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645 body £199
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45-85 F4.5 . . . . . £399
55 F2.8 . . . . . £299
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75 F2.8 leaf £199
80-160 F4.5 . . . . £399
135 F4 leaf £299
600 F5.6 ED IF + case £1499
Ext tube set £199
Ref conv £199

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MZ-50 body £39
BG10 grip £89
17-28 F3.5/4.5 . . £199
28-90 F3.5/5.6 . . . £69
35-80 F4.5/5.6 . . . £39
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SIGMA PKAF FIT
17-35 F2.8/4 EX . £169
28-70 F2.8 EX DG £169
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MX body chr . . . £129
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50 F1.7 PKA £59
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Fuji FinePix A600, re-box	£69.90
Fuji FinePix F 31fd	£139.00
Fuji FinePix S5700 Zoom with case & 512mb card	£149.00
Fuji FinePix S6500fd	£179.00
Fuji FinePix S9600 Zoom with HS-V2 RAW software	£259.00
Fuji FinePix Z5fd Silver with leather case & 256mb	£179.90
Nikon Coolpix L11	£99.00
Nikon Coolpix L2 : One only with case, & charger	£110.00
Nikon Coolpix P5000	£289.00
Nikon Coolpix S200 with case	£169.00
Nikon Coolpix S6 black with case and 512mb card	£159.00
Nikon Coolpix S9 with case	£149.00
Olympus Mju 725SW Blue : with free 256mb card	£199.00
Olympus Mju 770SW beach kit	£249.00
Olympus SP-550UZ : please phone for availability	£329.00
Panasonic DMC TZ3B Black	£279.00
Sony DSC-H7	£289.00
Sony DSC-H9	£329.00
Sony DSC-W 55S	£149.00
Sony DSC-W 90S	£239.00

DSLRs

Canon EOS 1D MK III	£2,995.00
Canon EOS 5D body	£1,550.00
Canon EOS 5D, 24-105	£2,070.00

Canon Product Launch 21st August.
Phone for our latest camera deals and prices.

Canon EOS 300 body	£589.90
Canon EOS 30D + EF-S 17-55 IS U	£1,175.00
Canon EOS 300, EF-S 17-85 IS	£895.00
Canon EOS 300, EF-S 18-55	£649.00
Canon EOS 350D, EF-S 18-55, 55-200	£489.00
Canon EOS 400D, grip, 17-85 IS, EF 70-300 IS	£1,149.00

Canon
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£649

Canon EOS 400D 17-85, grip	£859.00
Canon EOS 400D 18-55/55-200 : With free case	£649.00
Canon EOS 400D 18-55/55-200 KIT + BG-E3 :	£879.00
Canon EOS 400D body	£455.00
Canon EOS 400D, EF-S 18-55	£497.00
Canon EOS 400D, EF-S 18-55, Lowepro Case, lens cloth, mini tripod and 1gb card	£529.00
Canon Speedlite 430EX	£189.00
Sigma EF-500 DG Super EOS	£149.00
Sony Alpha 100, 18-200 Kit	£579.00
Sony Alpha 100, Body Only	£429.00

Fuji FinePix S 5 Pro body	£975.00
Nikon D 40 black, 18-55 f3/5-5.6G II ED	£369.00
Nikon D 40X black, 18-135	£539.00
Nikon D 40X black, 18-55 f3/5-5.6G II ED	£469.00
Nikon D 40X black, 18-70	£569.00
Nikon D 40X black, body only	£429.00
Nikon D 50 black, 18-55	£399.00
Nikon D 50 black, 18-55, Sigma 70-300, case	£499.00
Nikon D 80, 18-135	£699.00
Nikon D 80, 18-200	£1,049.00
Nikon D200 18-200VR	£1,329.00
Nikon D200 body	£815.00
Nikon D200 body with MB-D200 grip	£929.90
Nikon D200 body with Speedlite SB-800	£1,069.90
Nikon SB-600 Speedlight	£169.00
Olympus E-330 kit with EZ 14-45	£299.90
Pentax K100D, 18-55	£329.00

Lenses

Canon EF 17-40mm f4 L USM	£520.00
Canon EF 24- 70mm f2.8 L USM	£849.00
Canon EF 24-105mm f4 L IS USM ex 5D kit	£639.00
Canon EF 28-135mm f3.5/5.6 IS USM	£319.00
Canon EF 50mm f1.8 Mk II	£75.00
Canon EF 55-200mm f4.5/5.6IV USM Mk8	£129.00
Canon EF 70-200mm f2.8 L IS USM	£1,250.00
Canon EF 70-200mm f4 L USM	£459.00

Nikon D50, 18-55 + Sigma 70-300 and case
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* 2.in screen
* 3D matrix metering
* 5 Area AF

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Canon EF 70-300mm f4-5.6 IS USM	£379.00
Canon EF 70-300mm f4.5-5.6 DO IS USM	£775.00
Canon EF 100-400mm f4.5/5.6L IS USM	£1,025.00
Canon EF 100mm f2.8 USM Macro	£375.00
Canon EF 300mm f4 L IS USM	£929.00
Canon EF-S 10-22mm f3.5/4.5 USM	£499.00
Canon EF-S 17-85mm f4/5.6 IS USM	£399.00
Canon EF-S 60mm f2.8 Macro USM	£249.00
Kenko NEW DG 2X MC7 T/CONV	£99.00
Kenko NEW DG PRO-300 1.4X	£149.90
Nikon AF 60mm f2.8 D Micro	£369.00
Nikon AF-S VR 105mm f2.8G IF-ED	£499.00
Nikon AF-S VR 70-300mm f4.5-5.6 G IF-ED	£339.00
Sigma 10-20mm f4.5-5.6 EX DC HSM	£300.00
Sigma 12-24mm f4.5-5.6 EX DG HSM	£439.00
Sigma 17- 70mm f2.8-4.5 DC Macro	£229.00
Sigma 18- 50mm f2.8 EX DC Macro	£289.00
Sigma 18-200mm f3.5-6.3 DC	£229.00
Sigma 50-500mm f4-6.3 EX DG HSM APO	£749.00
Sigma 70-200mm f2.8 EX DG APO MACRO HSM	£669.00
Sigma 70-300mm f4-5.6 APO DG Macro	£159.00
Sigma 70-300mm f4-5.6 DG Macro S	£110.00
Sigma 105mm f2.8 Macro EX DG	£299.00
Sigma 120mm-300mm f2.8 EX DG APO	£1,660.00
Sigma 170-500mm f5-6.3 DG APO	£529.00
Sigma 300-800mm f5.6 EX DG APO HSM	£3,999.00
Tamron AF 17-50 F2.8 XRDi II LD Aspherical	£289.00
Tamron AF 18- 200mm f3.5-6.3 XRDi II LD Asph IF	£239.00
Tamron AF 18- 250mm f3.5-6.3 XRDi II LD Asph IF	£299.00
Tamron AF 70-300mm f4/5.6 Di	£110.00
Tamron SP AF 28-75 F2.8 XRDi	£249.00
Tamron SP AF 90mm f2.8 Di Macro	£299.00
Tamron SP AF11-18 Di II A13	£329.00

Accessories

Canon BG-E3 Battery Grip for EOS 350D/400D # with Free Rahnel battery	£99.00
Lowepro Topload Zoom Mini Forest Green	£24.90
Lowepro SlingShot 200 AW	£69.90
Kood Circular Polarising filter,58	£22.50
Hoya PROTECTOR, 58 SHMC PR01-D	£29.90
Silicon Power SD card, 1 gig x 80, 11mbps	£16.90
Fuji XD card, 256mb,	£12.90
Fuji XD card, One GB Type H	£22.90
Canon PIXMA iP6700D : Free pack of Canon A4 Pro paper	£119.90
Canon PIXMA MP600 : Free pack of Canon A4 paper	£129.90
Canon Selphy CP720	£59.90
Hama Remote control, CA-1 80cm for EOS 400D	£19.90
Manfrotto 190X Pro Tripod Black	£110.00
Manfrotto 718B mini Tripod Black	£59.90
Manfrotto Compact Monopod Black	£44.00

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Fuji F40 fd	£145
Fuji S9600	£ask
Nikon S200	£135
Nikon P5000	£ask
Olympus mju 770 sw	£215
Olympus SP550 uz	£285
Olympus E410 Kits from	£449
Panasonic FZ8	£185
Ricoh Caplio GX100VF1	£389
Ricoh Caplio R5	£125
Samsung GX10 Kits from	£499

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NEW! Lowepro Primus

A perfect combination of fast access and all-weather protection. Rugged construction with a recycled, water resistant outer fabric and a seam-sealed AW cover protects gear. This pack also conforms to a variety of body types with an adjustable 8-point harness system giving the adventure photographer exceptional comfort under heavy load.

£2 for every bag sold donated to Polar Bears International!

Morris price.. £169.00

Lowepro Rover AWII

Lowepro's popular, two-compartment backpack now comes with an adjustable, padded, built-in backpack harness that includes CollarCut shoulder straps, a sternum strap, waistbelt, and load-adjustment straps. Stow camera gear in the bottom compartment. Extras like outerwear and lunch can go in the top compartment, or remove the padded camera insert and use Rover AW II as a traditional backpack

Morris price.. £89.95

Lowepro Vertex 100 AW

A premium backpack for the serious adventure bound photographer or sports photojournalist, the Vertex series is made for the outdoors. Rugged, construction with water-resistant zippers and a seam-sealed AW cover protects gear while providing photographers with a bag that conforms to a variety of body types with an adjustable harness system.

Morris price.. £104.00

OTHER VERTEX BAGS AVAILABLE..

Vertex 200 AW .....£138 Vertex 300 AW £168

Lowepro Orion Trekker II

This backpack has been updated with all new aesthetics and great new designed-for-digital features. Still the perfect companion for day hikes, it has two compartments that easily carry camera gear plus snacks, clothing or personal items.

Morris price.. £34.90

Lowepro Mini Trekker Classic

Theres a reason we call this a classic - it has sailed through the test of time and terrain. A favorite of amateurs and pros alike, it stands up well to heavy use in the field and still looks good. This go-everywhere light backpack has a flexible interior and comfortable, carry-all-day harness. Attachment loops take optional SlipLock add-ons.

Morris price.. £62.90

Lowepro Mini Trekker AWII

This lightweight, compact backpack holds a surprising amount of gear in a small space. Theres a quick release integrated tripod holder, attachment loops for optional SlipLock accessories, compression straps and lots of pockets including large front pocket with a weather flap and quick access front pocket. The ergonomic harness features wide, padded shoulder straps and a sternum strap.

Morris price.. £72.90

Lowepro Compudaypack

Perfect for around campus or town, it is a lightweight spacious backpack. Its triple compartment design neatly manages the key components of digital photography with a rear compartment for a notebook computer (fits most 17" models) and files, and a lower compartment that accommodates a digital SLR with lens attached plus 2-3 lenses or flash units.

Morris price.. £74.95

Lowepro Dryzone 100

DryZone is the world's first totally waterproof, soft-sided camera backpack. Even fully loaded, they float so your gear is always protected. The inner drypod with patented, waterproof TIZIP™ zipper provides 100% watertight protection. It's like a drysuit for your equipment. When less protection is needed, leave the TIZIP™ open and fasten just the inner zipper and top clip for easier access.

Morris price.. £159.95

OTHER DRYZONE BAGS AVAILABLE..

Dryzone 200 .....£219.95 Dryzone Rover £164.95

Lowepro Rezo 180 AW

Designed to withstand the elements of a grueling trek yet stylish enough to use around town, the Rezo 180 AW accommodates a Pro Digital SLR camera with mid-range zoom lens, 3-4 extra lenses and accessories. The lightweight yet feature packed design of the Rezo 180 AW enhances usability while providing superior protection.

Morris price.. £39.95

Rezo 110AW ....£16.95 Rezo 160AW £29.95
Rezo 120AW ....£19.95 Rezo 170AW £34.95
Rezo 140AW ....£23.95 Rezo 190AW £44.95

Lowepro Lens Case 1s Stocked!

Made of water resistant fabric, the lens case provides protection and can be put on to a belt, or sliplock base product using the sliplock attachment tab.

Morris price.. £11.95

OTHER LENS CASES AVAILABLE FROM STOCK..

Lens Case 1 ....£12.95 Lens Case 3 ....£16.95
Lens Case 1m ...£11.95 Lens Case 4 ....£22.95
Lens Case 1n ...£11.95 Lens Case 4s ...£21.95
Lens Case 1w ...£13.95 Lens Case 5 ....£26.95
Lens Case 2 ....£13.95 Lens Case 5s ...£25.95
Lens Case 2s ...£13.95

Lowepro SlipLock Accessories

Belt & Buckle £9.95
Toploaad Zoom Chest Harness £16.95
Light Belt £18.95
Deluxe Waistbelt £28.95
Shoulder Harness £29.95
Backpack Harness £34.95
Vest Harness £39.95

Tamrac Digi Strap (N5053) FREE with all Tamrac bag orders over **£20** - when you mention this ad!!

Tamrac Velocity 7X NEW!

Though it doesn't look like a camera bag, the Velocity 7x - Photo Sling Pack is a unique, ultra-functional pack that carries like a back pack, but swings around to the front for quick access to an SLR with a 6" lens attached and a couple additional lenses.

Morris price.. £39.95

Velocity 5X .....£34.95 Velocity 8X £44.95
Velocity 6X .....£34.95 Velocity 9X £49.95

Tamrac Adventure 6 Red

Adventure 6 sports a youthful, modern and sleek design that, for security, does not look like a camera bag. In this uniquely designed backpack, the lower section is a completely foam-padded camera bag compartment, while the upper section functions like a traditional backpack to hold a light jacket, lunch or other personal items needed on your next photo adventure.

Morris price.. £29.00

OTHER ADVENTURE BAGS AVAILABLE..

ADVENTURE 7 .....£45.00
ADVENTURE 75 .....£63.00
ADVENTURE 9 RED ONLY £69.00
Adventure 6, 7 & 9 now available in Camouflage

Tamrac Expedition 3

This backpack offers expedition-level performance in a compact form. This full-featured pack is perfect for most SLRs with a lens attached up to 7" long, 3-4 additional lenses and accessories. For maximum protection, the pack is fully padded with thick, closed-cell foam. A cinch strap keeps the camera in place, a large rain flap protects the main compartment zippers. We believe this is the smallest backpack with built in tripod attachment.

Morris price.. £35.00

OTHER EXPEDITION BAGS AVAILABLE..

Expedition 4 .....£59.00
Expedition 5 .....£69.00
Expedition 7 .....£99.00
Expedition 8 .....£124.00

Tamrac Optional Raincover

Medium rain cover £17.95
Large rain cover £19.95

Kata R-103 Backpack

The R series is part of the Global Digital Collection, which incorporates TST - Thermo Shield Technology for the ultimate in protection while remaining light in weight. The special design of Kata's R-series gives quick, seperate access to your favourite camera+lens combination, while the rest of your gear remains secure inside the bag. The R-103 is able to accommodate 1 x Pro DSLR body with up to a 300mm lens attached, extra body, and 4-5 extra lenses, and a 15" laptop in a seperate compartment (also 17" Powerbook).

Morris price.. £129.00

R-101 Backpack £116.00 R-102 Backpack £119.00

Kata Hiker HB-205 Backpack

Inside the HB-205, Kata's "Yelloop" material is soft on your delicate gear, and yellow in colour, making it easy to find small accessories in low light. The deep main compartments are set up with Kata's "Modi-Verse" modular dividers. Outside, two open pockets hold water bottles or a small tripod, while a combination of other pockets all work together to carry maps, waterproofs etc.

Morris price.. £169.95

Also available HB-207 Backpack £189.95

NG Earth Explorer Medium

Ideal for an SLR camera, 3-4 lenses, accessories Room for hiking accessories/food with pocket for a laptop computer or large notebook. Pull-out side pouch holds a bottle of water

Morris price.. £114.95

NG Medium Shoulder Bag

Perfect for an SLR camera, 2-3 lenses, accessories Zippered roll-away flap offers extra protection from the elements, a pocket takes a laptop computer. Padded shoulder strap.

Morris price.. £79.95

Crumpler Daily Series

The Crumpler Daily is a super-glamour shoulder camera bag. It comes in six sizes and four colours. They have a multitude of uses - a camera bag with the insert, remove the insert the bag becomes a messenger bag, or a laptop bag with seperate pouch for mains charger, mouse etc and plenty of room for files.

DAILY BAGS AVAILABLE..

DAILY 210 (S) £54.00
DAILY 370 (M) £64.00
DAILY 490 (L) £69.00
DAILY 600 (XL) £84.00
DAILY 750 (XXL) £94.00

Billingham Hadley Pro

Based on the immensly popular Hadley Original, the Hadley Pro has extra features; a carrying handle, a weatherproof zipped back pocket and the facility to accept AVEA pouches. The camera insert is removeable so one day it can be a roomy, well-equipped camera bag; the next it can double as a business case.

Morris price.. £99.00

OTHER BILLINGHAM BAGS ALSO AVAILABLE....

Hadley Small ...£89.95 Hadley Original .£94.95
Hadley Large ..£104.95 Hadley Digital ...£69.95
Packington £149.95

Gossen DigiPro F Meter

Flash and ambient light lightmeter with a convenient swivel head. Incident and reflected light with both flash and ambient light. NORMALLY £194.95

Morris price.. £129.95

Braun E130 AF Projector

A compact automatic slide projector in an attractive silver design. It features an infrared auto focus system and a precise lens-guide with ball-bearing offers comfort and easy in handling.

Morris price.. £129.95

Gitzo 1550T Tripod

Gitzo's unique patented 180° folding mechanism accommodates the head inside the folded tripod legs and makes this the smallest folded tripod for its open size and number of sections.

Morris price.. £418.95

Slik Sprint GM Tripods

The Sprint Pro is an incredibly versatile tripod, with a compact pack size and impressive height and features. Multi position legs enable very low shooting angles, and offer extra versatility on uneven ground. When the going gets a little tougher, the rubber feet can be screwed back to reveal metal spikes

ALSO...

Morris price.. £49.95

Sprint Mini GM NORMALLY £39.95 .....£34.95

Slik 700DX AMT Tripod

Featuring Slik's new Super Alloy "AMT" - a blend of Aluminium, Magnesium & Titanium for a strength to weight ratio some 40% greater than similar tripods. Multi-position legs (30.2mm in diameter allow low level shooting, and extra versatility on uneven ground. The Pro 700DX is currently supplied with FREE 700DX head worth £59.99

Morris price.. £92.90

Velbon Ultra Luxi F Tripod

With a top leg diameter of 24mm the Ultra Luxi F is a compact, sturdy, yet lightweight tripod suitable for the new, modern digital SLR & most other camera systems. The pan and tilt head, together with three spirit levels and twin handles gives a degree of accuracy, usually seen only in top level, professional tripods.

NORMALLY £99.95 **Morris price.. £59.95**

Velbon Ultra Stick 50 Monopod

The Velbon Ultra Stick 50 is a titanium 5 section leg with rubber foot and twist-lock leg sections.

Morris price.. £22.95

OTHER ULTRA STICK MONOPODS AVAILABLE...

Ultra Stick 40 4 section Titanium £19.95
Ultra Stick 50LX 5 section Titanium in black £24.95

Manfrotto 055 XPROB NEW!

The manfrotto 055XPROB makes the Manfrotto patented horizontal centre column feature even easier to use. By extending the column to its highest vertical position, it can be swung round to horizontal without removing the head or disassembling the column itself.

Also 055 XB.....£114.95 **Morris price.. £POA**

Manfrotto 190 XProB Tripod

Newly redesigned, the 190X PROB makes the famous Manfrotto-patented horizontal center column feature even easier to use. Now, by extending the column to it's highest vertical position, it can be swung around to horizontal without removing the head or disassembling the column itself, so switching between framing and positioning setups is more convenient than ever.

Also 190 XB.....£84.95 **Morris price.. £89.95**

Manfrotto 525P + 503HDV

A complete kit consisting of the 525MVB Lightweight Video Tripod, the 503 Pro Video Head, the 3284 Half Ball, the 3138 Spreader and the MBAG90P Padded Tripod Bag. The 525MVB is a two-stage, lightweight, high-tensile aluminum tripod that is extremely rigid and stable. The 503 Pro Video Head is designed to support the latest professional digital video cameras.

Morris price.. £369.95

Manfrotto Padded Bags

Padded Manfrotto 80P tripod bag 80cm long. Zip extends down the length of the bag, but also fully opens the top end of the bag. Thermoform paddin holds the tripod in place and protects it.

for 055, 440, 441, 443 & 444 tripods with most heads **Morris price.. £41.90**

Mbag70 .....£20.95 785bag Special ..£36.95

MANFROTTO HEADS AVAILABLE FROM STOCK..

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482 .....£24.95 700RC2 .....£64.95
484RC2 .....£39.95 701RC2 .....£84.95
486RC2 .....£49.95 804RC2 .....£54.95

MANFROTTO PLATES AVAILABLE FROM STOCK..

323 quick change adapter platform £22.95
357 sliding plate adapter £34.95
410PL for RC4 heads £14.95
454 micro positioning sliding plate £49.95
501PL for RC4 heads £16.95

Pantone huey Pro

Take monitor calibration to the next level with PANTONE hueyPRO. Designed for photographers, creative professionals and enthusiasts looking to increase their colour control. In addition to automated calibration, the hueyPRO offers users greater control over brightness and contrast, with separate menu choices for the selection of gamma and white point settings.

Morris price.. £97.95

Ricoh GX100 Quality Compact

The latest offering from Ricoh breaks new ground by offering a 24-72mm zoom, the widest lens yet fitted to a compact camera. 10 million pixels and an Adobe DNG RAW option ensure quality output for even the most demanding photographer. Lots of other standard features make this a camera that will do everything you ask of it.

Morris price..

Camera only £349.00 VF-1 kit £389.00

Pentax K100D Super

The new K100D Super combines the acclaimed Shake Reduction system with an innovative Dust Removal system to assure optimum image quality. It also offers an array of advanced technologies, user-friendly features, and an easy-to-hold and easy-to-use design.

Camera only £349.95 18-55mm kit £389.00

Pentax K10D

The K10D combines 10.2 effective megapixels with a host of advanced technologies — including the PENTAX original Shake Reduction system — to deliver high-quality digital SLR photography and responsive operations to advanced amateurs and experienced hobbyists.

Camera inc 2Gb SD card £524.95

Camera inc 18-55mm lens kit £489.00

Camera inc 18-55mm + 50-200mm lens kit £649.00

Tamron Di Lenses

Unlike conventional lenses, designed to cope with internal diffused reflections of a mirror box and film surface, Di lenses offer new anti-reflection counter measures that are essential in lenses designed for use with digital cameras.

90mm f2.8 SP Di Macro

For outstanding image quality when used with film or digital.

Inc FREE UV filter **£269.95**

OTHER TAMRON LENSES AVAILABLE..All inc FREE UV filter

11-18mm F4.5/5.6 Di II Aspherical £324.95
17-50mm XR Di-II LD IF £279.95
18-250mm F3.5/6.3 Di-II LD Aspherical IF Macro ..£299.95
28-300mm F3.5/6.3 Di-I Macro £199.95
70-300mm F4/5.6 Di LD Macro £119.95
200-500mm F3.5/6.3 Di LD £629.95

Kenko DG Pro converters

Kenko Teleplus converters are designed to operate the same way as an original manufacturer's converter. Made with precision quality multicoated optical glass the design of the elements and light path is wide enough not to cause vignetting.

Morris price.. 1.4x £154.95 2x £149.95

Ilford Inkjet Papers

We are an Ilford professional dealer and keep a large range of their products in stock, in most finishes at A4, A3 and A3+. See web for details and pricing.

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Hoya Pro-1 Digital Filters

Newly formulated multi-coating for digital camera CCD or CMOS sensor. These image capture devices are highly susceptible to reflections - this stray light can ruin your photographs, Pro-1 Digital filters provide the solution.

Size..	Dig Prot	U V	Circ Pol
52mm	£17.95	£17.95	£54.95
55mm	£20.95	£20.95	£57.95
58mm	£21.95	£23.95	£62.95
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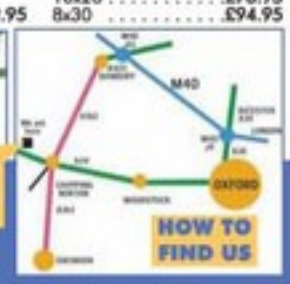

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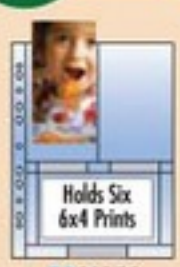

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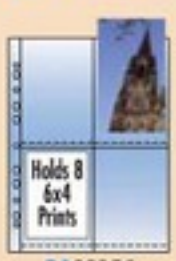

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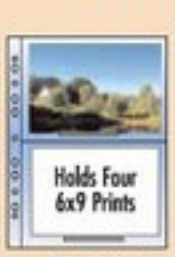

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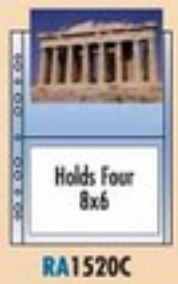

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58mm	£11.00	£25.00	£28.00	£61.00
62mm	£14.00	£28.00	£37.00	£69.00
67mm	£17.00	£32.00	£43.00	£76.00
72mm	£21.00	£36.00	£43.00	£97.00
77mm	£25.00	£39.00	£52.00	£115.00
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What Digital Camera

What to buy... and how to use it

Buyer's Guide

1063 Cameras, Lenses & Accessories in the **UK'S BIGGEST BUYER'S GUIDE**

Looking to buy a digital camera, lens or accessory? ***Then start here!***

The *What Digital Camera* Buyer's Guide is the most comprehensive listing of current cameras and accessories in the UK. More than 1000 products are listed here to help you choose what to buy and what to avoid.

We try to keep this list as up-to-date as possible, and this inevitably means listing products that we haven't yet tested, due to publishing lead times. We indicate new products by a **NEW** beside the item in the listing, and add our score as soon as we've completed our test. Conversely, some products will remain in our listings after they have officially been discontinued (subject to space). We continue to list them while stocks are still available to buy and check availability on a monthly basis.

Despite the mass of information here, these are just summaries of our tests. Before making your purchase, why not read the whole test by buying a back issue or a test report from our website (at www.whatdigitalcamera.com) or call us on 01707 273773?

AT A GLANCE
GUIDE CONTENTS

Digital cameras (fixed lens)	p128
Digital SLRs	p136
Lenses	p140
Flashguns	p144
Bags	p146
Tripods	p147
Portable storage	p148
Media Cards	p149
Printers, Scanners and All-in-ones	p150
Software	p154
Contact listing	p155

ABOUT WHAT DIGITAL CAMERA'S TESTS

Every month *What Digital Camera*'s technical team tests the latest cameras and accessories to help you sort the wheat from the chaff. Our team of highly experienced photographers subject our review samples to field tests and, in the case of cameras and lenses, to lab analysis using software from DxO and Imatest. We are confident that our tests are the most authoritative in the UK.

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Everything you need to know to help you make the right choice

What Compact

In today's competitive marketplace there is a wide variety of digital cameras, each zeroing in on particular users' needs. While pixel counts have been climbing ever higher, and in doing so outgunning the specification currently offered by camera phones, prices have been steadily falling.

That's thanks in part to the fact that just about everyone who wants a digital camera has one. So, to generate sales, manufacturers are now focusing their development teams on those little extras that differentiate them from the competition, whether it be a 10x optical zoom crammed within a compact body, the ability to shoot in low light without flash at high ISO speeds, or anti-shake in the form of either optical or mechanical (CCD-shift) image stabilisation.

All as clear as mud? Never fear, *WDC* is here to lay bare the key features and types of camera you need to consider before parting with your hard-earned cash...

BUYING ADVICE: CHOOSING A COMPACT

CONSIDER YOUR NEEDS: Think about how you will use your camera – is it for day-to-day snaps, for example, or do you want to shoot landscapes? Choose the best model for your life and photographic style.

RESOLUTION: More pixels doesn't always mean a camera's better. A recent study showed that most people can't tell the difference between a 5MP or 8MP image when printed to 5x7inches.

BATTERY POWER: Most compacts use either Lithium-Ion rechargeable, or AA batteries. Decide which are the most appropriate – if you're on a gap year in Thailand, AA batteries may be easier to come by than a convenient power point.

KEY: THE COMPACT CAMERA LISTINGS EXPLAINED

	Fujifilm F30	£160 (£230 rrp)	6 Mega Pixels	36-108mm f/2.8-5	Program Aperture Shutter Manual 16 Scene	100-3200	No 2.5	xD LI	93 x 57 x 28mm 195g	PROS Great images in low light up to ISO 1600, fast, hi-res screen CONS No viewfinder, misleading manual position	A great camera with few bad habits aimed at everyday snappers and leading the field in low light performance	88% What Digital Camera RECOMMENDED	TESTED SEP 2006
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13

1 PRODUCT NAME
Name of manufacturer and camera model. And, a small thumb-nail image of the product itself

2 PRICE
A Suggested retail price
B Average street price

3 SENSOR
Number of pixels

4 LENS
We use 35mm equivalent focal length and show the maximum aperture at wide and telephoto positions

5 EXPOSURE MODES
Most have Program AE for automatic shooting, but some have manual controls

6 ISO RANGE
The wider the better, especially for poor light

7 VIEWING
A Optical or Electronic (Evf)
B LCD size in inches

8 MEDIA CARD/POWER
A Card type (Internal memory in GB)
B Battery Lithium Ion (LI), AA Alkaline or rechargeable (AA)

9 DIMENSIONS/WEIGHT
Length x Height x Depth

10 PROS & CONS
What we like
What we don't

11 COMMENTS
Additional Information

12 RATIING
Out of 100%

13 TESTED
Date of the WDC issue this test appeared in

What Digital Camera GOLD AWARD
GOLD AWARD
For scores over 90%

What Digital Camera RECOMMENDED
RECOMMENDED AWARD
For scores over 85%

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Which best suits your photographic requirements: compact, slim-line, bridge, superzoom or enthusiast?

Point and shoot →

Most of us want a portable camera that will slot into a trouser or shirt pocket for spur-of-the-moment snaps, and work out for itself the best focus and exposure. Such fully auto models tend to have the lowest resolution on offer, but that's sufficient quality for photo-realistic prints at regular postcard or A4 sheet size. When buying a snapshot camera opt for a major brand, and don't spend much less than £100.

← Lifestyle

If style is important to you then there is a bewildering array of cameras to choose from. The camera's body will be fashioned to a greater degree from metal rather than plastic, and of course the price reflects this. Still, you'll typically have a resolution of between 8 and 10 megapixels, often with an internally stacked zoom lens and, increasingly, WiFi capabilities.

All weather and/or shockproof →

Another way in which manufacturers are attempting to differentiate their compacts is by giving them sealed weatherproof or waterproof bodies, while Olympus markets a camera that is also shockproof. So if you like adventure sports or you're simply butter fingered – check out these babies that will bounce back for more.

←Enthusiast

A camera that may require a steep learning curve for the beginner, but which offers plenty of manual control. It may not feature a huge zoom capacity but is nevertheless stacked with real photographic features. As such, enthusiast models set themselves up as ideal back-up cameras for those who already own a DSLR, but want something more portable for that spur-of-the-moment picture-taking opportunity.

Superzoom →

Want to get up close and personal with your subject matter but don't want the bulk or price of a DSLR? Then the 10x or 12x optical zoom capability offered by these enthusiast-targeted models will come in handy – the theory being that they offer so much control, the user won't actually need an SLR. The downside is that superzooms are bulkier than other types of 'compact', and ideally need a decent image-stabilisation system when shooting at the telephoto end of the zoom.

What Digital Camera

Need to Know

Dazed and confused? Our guide to all the techno babble will ease your pain...

RESOLUTION AND SIZE OF CCD

All digital cameras provide a resolution measured in megapixels (one million pixels = one megapixel), with 10 megapixels (which will provide enough picture information to allow photo-realistic, poster-sized prints) being the current maximum for compacts. At the entry level, you'll find manufacturers offering cameras with 4MP or 5MP, which is still perfectly acceptable for a standard 6x4in or 8x10in print. But a camera's resolution isn't everything – the internal processor and lens also have important roles to play. Furthermore, the physical size of the sensor and individual pixels can really make a difference.

ISO SPEEDS

All but the most basic point-and-shoot digital cameras offer the ability to manually adjust ISO speed to take into account the lighting conditions at the time, with settings equating to those given for film – ISO 100 for bright, sunny conditions, ISO 400 for cloudy, and so on. The latest trends in lifestyle photography, however, have pioneered turning off the camera flash and utilising the more flattering effects of natural light, thus requiring higher ISO speeds to avoid camera shake (and image blur) in dimmer light. Companies such as Fujifilm and Ricoh have pioneered higher settings such as ISO 1600-3200 in their compacts – most of them previously stopped at ISO 400 to avoid pronounced image noise. So, if you want to avoid bleached faces and that rabbit-in-the-headlights looks when taking portraits indoors, look for a camera with a fast ISO speed, and preferably some form of image stabilisation and noise reduction built in.

ZOOM LENS

Just about every digital camera comes with a zoom lens – that brings your subject closer without you literally having to take a few steps forward – as opposed to a (non-moving) 'fixed' variety. Most entry-level compacts offer a fairly modest 3x optical zoom, though increasingly larger 10x and 12x zooms have become the norm on enthusiasts' models. Specifications are also often given that take into account an additional digital zoom; it's best ignored, as all this does is crop a central portion of the image to give the effect of having zoomed in. If size and portability of your camera is an issue, you might also like to consider whether to go for an internally stacked lens system rather than one that (more traditionally) stands proud of the body.

ANTI SHAKE/IMAGE STABILISATION

Under certain conditions the effects of hand wobble – known as 'camera shake' – become more pronounced; the result being that blurred images are captured. A way of solving this, though, is to include an anti-shake feature, the most effective being optical (a feature of the lens elements) or mechanical (the CCD or internal chip shifts to counterbalance external motion). If you're serious about your photography, some form of image stabilisation is essential, especially with longer zoom lenses or if you use your LCD monitor to compose your images at arm's length.

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				LENS	EXP MODES	ISO	VIEW/LCD (in)	MEMORY/BATT	SIZE / WEIGHT	PROS & CONS	SUMMARY	SCORE	
	Nikon L10	£75 (£105 rrp)	5 Mega Pixels	37.5-112.5mm f/2.8-5.2	Auto 16 Scene	Auto 64-800	No 2	SD 7 AA	89.5 x 60.5 x 26 mm 115g	PROS Design, ease of use, image quality CONS Slow writing speed	Featuring an impressive ISO range and Nikon's 'D-lighting' mode, helping to get the exposure right in the majority of situations, the L10 ticks most of the boxes you want in an entry-level camera and offers good value for money. Great noise control too.	80%	TESTED JUL 2007
	Fujifilm A610	£80 (£100 rrp)	6 Mega Pixels	39-117mm f/3-5.4	Auto Manual 14 Scene	Auto 100-400	No 2.5	xD/ SD 10 AA	97.5 x 61.9 x 31mm 145g	PROS Manual option, large screen for budget compact CONS Slightly bulky, agressive noise reduction, fringing, limited ISO range	Poor image quality lets down an otherwise good entry-level model. The ISO range only stretches to 400 but 14 scene modes and a manual option do at least offer a little more control over exposure.	78%	TESTED JUL 2007
	Samsung S630	£80 (£88 rrp)	6 Mega Pixels	35-105mm f/2.8-4.9	Auto Program 11 Scene	Auto 80-400	No 2.5	SD 16 AA	99.8 x 62.8 x 25.7mm 136g	PROS Manual option, shake reduction CONS Utilitarian design, menus not intuitive	A good starter camera with a range of options. Exposures are consistent over a range of subjects and image quality is, on the whole, good. A slightly limited ISO range and noise visible in blown-up images, however, let it down slightly.	80%	TESTED JUL 2007
	Canon A460	£90 (£120 rrp)	5 Mega Pixels	38-152mm f/2.8-5.8	Program 9 Scene	Auto 80-400	Yes 2	SD AA	106 x 52 x 40mm 215g	PROS Ease of use, optical viewfinder CONS Low-resolution LCD, lacks wide angle	Replacing the PowerShot A430, the entry-level PowerShot A460 adds improved specifications while retaining the point-and-shoot functionality of its predecessor. Images are well exposed with accurate colour rendition, with the viewfinder also a bonus.	82%	TESTED MAY 2007
	Fujifilm A700	£90 (£80 rrp)	7 Mega Pixels	36-108mm f/2.8-5.2	Program 4 Scene	Auto 100-400	No 2.4	xD 12 AA	93 x 60 x 30mm 139g	PROS An excellent price, including manual mode with a simple control layout CONS Low-res LCD, slow to use and max ISO of 400	A basic point-and-shoot camera with little to shout about, but the A700 does everything it should. Image quality is good, rather than great, and operational speed is fairly average but for £100 what do you expect?	77%	TESTED APR 2007
	Olympus FE-210	£90 (£100 rrp)	7 Mega Pixels	38-114mm f/3.1-5.9	Auto 15 Scene	Auto 64-640	No 2.5	xD 9 AA	90 x 62.5 x 30.5mm 122g	PROS Image quality, design CONS ISO can't be set manually	Olympus has been a top name in compact cameras for years and this proves to be a competitive model. Great spec matches its attractive design, while images are consistently good despite no option of setting the ISO manually.	82%	TESTED JUL 2007
	Kodak M753	£100 (£120 rrp)	7 Mega Pixels	37-111mm f/2.8-5.2	Program 17 Scene	Auto 80-1250	No 2.5	SD 16 LI	93 x 58 x 23mm 115g		One of Kodak's latest compacts and the first in the 'M' range. Coming in a choice of six colours, the M753 boasts HD capture, image stabilisation and Kodak's Perfect Touch technology		NOT YET TESTED
	Samsung S830	£100 (£120 rrp)	8 Mega Pixels	35-105mm f/2.8-5.2	Auto Program Manual 10 Scene	Auto 50-400	No 2.7	SD 20 AA	99.6 x 61.8 x 26.9mm 169g	PROS Image quality, manual control, clear and responsive LCD CONS Bulky, awkward controls	For the price, image quality is very good while the large 2.7in LCD screen is both clear and responsive. A fairly basic ISO range of 50-400 is a little bit disappointing but all in all a good choice as a budget model with plenty of features.	85% What Digital Camera RECOMMENDED	TESTED JUL 2007
	Nikon L11	£100 (£130 rrp)	6 Mega Pixels	37.5-112.5mm f/2.8-5.2	Auto 16 Scene	Auto 64-800	No 2.4	SD 7 AA	89.5 x 60.5 x 27 mm 125g	PROS Simple to use CONS Lack of features	The L11 is a competent point-and-shoot camera, but that's all it does – no bells, no whistles and no control. An ideal first camera for the more technically challenged members of your family. In bright light, images are great but struggles in other conditions.	84%	TESTED OCT 2007
	Pentax E30	£100 (£100 rrp)	7 Mega Pixels	36-108mm f/2.7-4.8	Auto Program 12 Scene	Auto 80-400	No 2.4	SD 11 AA	61.5 x 94.5 x 35.4mm 137.5g	PROS Price, design CONS Exposure variation, LCD hard to see in bright light, auto mode a little slow	A good choice of scene modes but a limited ISO range and inconsistent exposures let it down. It's a good budget option as a first-time buy, but you may soon want to upgrade to another model from the range with more options.	79%	TESTED JUN 2007
	Panasonic LS60	£100 (£130 rrp)	6 Mega Pixels	35-105mm f/2.8-5.0	Auto 19 Scene	Auto 100-1250	No 2	SD 27 AA	93.7x 62 x 29.7mm 135g	PROS Wide ISO range, image stabilisation, easy zoom function, exposure compensation CONS A little chunky, no manual option	Featuring an excellent ISO range, optical image stabilisation and exposure compensation, Panasonic's LS60 is an excellent starter camera with lots of options. The only downsides are the 2in LCD screen and the slightly chunky body.	85% What Digital Camera RECOMMENDED	TESTED JUL 2007
	Fujifilm A800	£105 (£140 rrp)	8 Mega Pixels	36-108mm f/2.8-5.2	Auto Manual 14 Scene	Auto 100-800	No 2.5	xD/ SD 10 AA	97 x 62 x 31mm 151g	PROS Simplicity, Super HR CCD sensor CONS Minor issues with images, digital image stabilisation	As point and shoots go, the A800 should keep all but the discerning punters happy. Minor image faults are minimal – especially for the audience this is aimed at – and are outweighed by the camera simplicity and ease of use.	82%	TESTED SEP 2007
	Kodak V803	£110 (£150 rrp)	8 Mega Pixels	36-108mm f/2.8-4.9	Program 22 Scene	Auto 80-1600	No 2.5	SD 32 LI	103 x 55 x 25mm 141.5g	PROS Rapid image reviewing, good detail, value for money CONS Slightly bulky, LCD tends to 'streak'	An accessible camera that provides easy access to features often overlooked by beginners, at an entry-level price. Images can appear a touch cold at times but exposures are great and matched by a competent AF system.	85% What Digital Camera RECOMMENDED	TESTED JUN 2007
	Sony S700	£110 (£170 rrp)	7 Mega Pixels	35-105mm f/2.8-4.8	Auto Program 11 Scene	Auto 100-1000	No 2.4	MS 24 AA	91 x 61 x 25.5mm 149g		A fairly standard 3x optical zoom features, as does a 2.4in LCD screen is powered by Sony's Real Imaging Processor. The ISO range stretches upto 1000.		NOT YET TESTED
	Vivitar 6200w	£115 (£120 rrp)	6 Mega Pixels	n/a f/3.3	Auto 8 Scene	n/a	Yes 2	SD AA	120 x 78 x 43mm 230g	PROS In-water ability, handling, affordable CONS Bulky design, poor image quality	Whilst the VivitCam 6200w provides acceptable results in the water at an affordable price, the overall feel of the camera is such that using it anyplace else is an unpleasant experience.	75%	TESTED SEP 2007
	Nikon L12	£115 (£150 rrp)	7 Mega Pixels	35-105mm f/2.8-4.7	Auto 15 Scene	Auto 80-1600	No 2.5	SD AA	91 x 61 x 26mm 125g	PROS ISO range, Vibration Reduction, design, muppet-proof CONS Slow writing speed, no manual ISO adjustment, noise	A great camera for someone who doesn't want the hassle of reading manuals, or full manual control. It is intuitive and user friendly with good tools to help the digital novice	86% What Digital Camera RECOMMENDED	TESTED SEP 2007
	Nikon L6	£120 (£130 rrp, was £300)	6 Mega Pixels	38-116mm f/3.2-5.6	Program 17 Scene	Auto 50-800	No 2.5	SD 23 AA	91 x 61 x 26mm 175g	PROS Good image quality, plenty of scene modes CONS Noisy, whining zoom	There's very little control over what it does, but with plenty of light delivers nice results. Vibrant colours and an accurate white balance are let down by noise though, with fine detail seeming to 'melt away' even in 5x7in prints.	72%	TESTED FEB 2007
	Sony S600	£120 (£160 rrp)	6 Mega Pixels	31-93mm f/2.8-5.1	Auto 7 Scene	Auto 80-1000	Yes 2	MS AA	99 x 52 x 36mm 181g	PROS High ISO 1000, wide lens, reasonable price CONS Noise at ISO 1000, plastic body, clunkiness	A middle-of-the-road camera despite an impressively high ISO. A bulky body lets it down while noise is apparent on the highest ISO setting.	82%	TESTED FEB 2007
	Pentax M30	£125 (£140 rrp)	7 Mega Pixels	38-114mm f/3.1-5.9	Program 15 Scene	Auto 64-3200	No 2.5	SD 22 LI	57 x 97 x 18mm 120g	PROS Metal body, fuss-free image capture, good value CONS Noisy (even at low ISO settings), unintuitive menu system	Average spec model with the exception of ISO 3200 for low-light work, but has a metal body and produces decent results. Not a bad budget buy and reasonably stylish for the price.	86% What Digital Camera RECOMMENDED	TESTED MAY 2007
	Samsung L700	£130 (£200 rrp)	7 Mega Pixels	38-114mm f/3.1-5.9	Auto Program 11 Scene	Auto 50-1600	No 2.5	SD 20 LI	96.9 x 56.8 x 20.5mm 130g	PROS Image quality, Simplicity, Design CONS Digital Image Stabilisation	Great specification coupled with impressive images make the L700 really stand out as a budget compact. In-camera editing options and decent ISO range round of the specification with little to criticise too heavily.	86% What Digital Camera RECOMMENDED	TESTED OCT 2007

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				LENS	EXP MODES	ISO	VIEW/LCD (in)	MEMORY/BATT	SIZE / WEIGHT	PROS & CONS	SUMMARY	SCORE	
	Fujifilm F31fd	£130 (£230 rrp)	6 Mega Pixels	36-108mm f/2.8-5	Program Shutter Aperture 16 Scene	Auto 100-3200	No 2.5	xD 10 LI	93 x 57 x 28mm 155g	**PROS** Fast AF and zoom action, great image quality up to ISO 400 **CONS** Bland looks, boring zoom range	Face detection marks the difference between this and the Fuji F30, but it's debatable how useful this is. The F31fd is pretty good and puts in a decent performance but doesn't set the world on fire	86% What Digital Camera	TESTED MAR 2007
	Samsung S1030	£130 (£330 rrp)	10 Mega Pixels	35-105mm f/2.8-5.1	Auto Program Manual 10 Scene	Auto 80-1000	No 2.7	SD 45 AA	99.6 x 61.8 x 26.9mm 169g	**PROS** Simplicity of use, straightforward menus, good value for money **CONS** Basic design, slight fringing	The Samsung S1030 won't win any prizes for design innovation, but it delivers good results at a remarkably low price. On the high-quality image setting, good results with minimal noise can be	83%	TESTED AUG 2007
	Olympus FE-230	£130 (£250 rrp)	7 Mega Pixels	35-105mm f/2.8-4.9	Auto 18 Scene	Auto 50-1250	No 2.5	xD 20 LI	90.5 x 55 x 16.5mm 105g		Plenty of scene modes as well as generous ISO capabilities mark the FE-230 as a useful budget buy, while a 16.5mm slim body make it a stylish one at that. A 7MP sensor and 30fps movie mode also feature.		NOT YET TESTED
	Panasonic LZ5	£130 (£270 rrp)	7 Mega Pixels	37-222mm f/2.8-4.5	Auto 19 Scene	Auto 100-3200	No 2	SD 27 AA	98.5 x 62.3 x 33.1mm 180g		Strong zoom and a good ISO range make the LZ5 look like a promising compact. Only a 2in LCD screen here but a generous 19 scene modes seem to offer a lot of exposure control.		NOT YET TESTED
	Kodak Z710	£130 (£260 rrp)	7 Mega Pixels	38-380mm f/2.8-3.7	Auto Program Aperture Shutter Manual 18 Scene	Auto 64-800	Evf 2	SD 32 LI	98 x 78 x 73mm 285g	**PROS** Nice price, focal range, manual exposure control's **CONS** Average image quality, small LCD, sensitive pop-up flash	Delivering average image quality and performance, the Z710 is nevertheless good value for those seeking enhanced creative features on a budget, helped in part by a good deal of manual control.	79%	TESTED JAN 2007
	Nikon S200	£135 (£275 rrp)	7 Mega Pixels	38-114mm f/3.1-5.9	Auto 15 Scene	Auto 50-1000	No 2.5	SD 20 LI	91.5 x 56.5 x 18.5mm 125g	**PROS** Image quality, slim body, extensive specification **CONS** No Program mode, excessive sharpening	Quality build and specification coupled with slick performance make the S200 an excellent choice. Images are sharp and noise is well controlled, only creeping in at the higher end of the ISO range. Great value for what you're getting too.	88% What Digital Camera	TESTED JUL 2007
	Panasonic FX3	£135 (£200 rrp)	6 Mega Pixels	35-105mm f/2.8-5 Stabilised	Program 18 Scene	Auto 100-400	No 2.5	SD 13 LI	94.1 x 51.1 x 24.2mm 125g	**PROS** Beautiful design, Mega OIS **CONS** Low-resolution LCD, aggressive noise reduction	The FX3 may not have advanced shooting modes, but its gorgeous looks, sensible resolution and image-stabilised lens recommend it. Excellent low-ISO image quality make it a great first-time buy.	85% What Digital Camera	TESTED MAR 2007
	Casio EX-Z75	£135 (£350 rrp)	7 Mega Pixels	38-114mm f/3.1-5.9	Program Best Shot	Auto 50-400	No 2.6	SD LI	95.4 x 60.6 x 19.6mm 122g	**PROS** Style, Ease of operation **CONS** Image quality, Small Buttons	Looks good and is indeed 'user-friendly, fun and convenient', as promised, but that's where fun stops. Image quality is only suitable for smaller print sizes, revealing a host of flaws at its maximum resolution, while a low-quality LCD screen further disappoints.	82%	TESTED OCT 2007
	Panasonic FX10	£135 (£350 rrp)	6 Mega Pixel	35-105mm f/2.8-8	Program 20 Scene	Auto 100-3200	No 2.5	SD LI	94 x 51 x 24mm 125g		An image-stabilised Leica lens and sensible pixel count could make the FX10 appealing. Available in blue, black and silver, an ergonomic grip also features for improved handling.		NOT YET TESTED
	Fujifilm S5700	£135 (£290 rrp)	7 Mega Pixels	38-380mm f/3.5-3.7	Program Auto Aperture Shutter Manual 12 Scene	Auto 64-1600	Evf 2.5	SD 27 AA	106.1x 75.7 x 80.7mm 306g	**PROS** Image stabilisation, useful features, weight and size **CONS** Fringing, limited colour options, Raw mode taken out of upgrade	A fantastic camera with plenty of features, but unfortunately, image quality isn't up to standard and devalues an otherwise competent performer. It really is a shame because this could be the perfect bridge camera for a great price.	83%	TESTED AUG 2007
	Sanyo E7	£140 (£280 rrp)	7 Mega Pixels	38-114mm f/3.1-5.9	Program 14 scene	Auto 50-800	No 2.5	SD 23 LI	91x 56x 21.mm 116g	**PROS** Plenty of features, Metal shell **CONS** Low resolution LCD, Low image quality, Average WB and exposures	The Xacti E7's metal shell is packed full of features, but this fails to compensate for fundamentally poor image quality. Its metal body represents good value for money though, and both looks and feels good.	81%	TESTED JUL 2007
	BenQ X725	£140 (£365 rrp)	7 Mega Pixels	375-1125mm f/2.7-5.2	Auto 28 Scene	Auto 80-1600	No 2.5	SD 12 LI	91 x 60 x 14.7mm 120g		Coming in a choice of four colours, the X725 is the world's slimmest 7MP compact and boasts Super Shake Free image stabilisation along with an attractively designed stainless steel body, while the ISO stretches up to 4000 in its video mode.		NOT YET TESTED
	Kodak V1003	£140 (£200 rrp)	10 Mega Pixels	36-108mm f/2.8-4.9	Program 22 Scene	Auto 80-160	No 2.5	SD 32 LI	103 x 55 x 25mm 141.5g	**PROS** Fast start-up and AF, design, exposure options, price **CONS** Button layout, noise	Good family compact, due to its looks, flexibility and attractive price. Image quality isn't bad either for a 10MP camera, while fast autofocus and start-up times also impress along with a solid metal body.	82%	TESTED JUN 2007
	Panasonic FX12	£140 (£290 rrp)	7 Mega Pixels	35-105mm f/2.8-5.0	Auto 21 Scene	Auto 100-1250	No 2.5	SD 27 LI	94.1 x 51.4 x 24.2mm 153g		Compact and stylish with a good ISO range and a stabilised lens. A Venus III processing engine features, as does an Extra Optical Zoom function, allowing you to increase optical zoom up to 4.5x.		NOT YET TESTED
	Samsung NV3	£145 (£230 rrp)	7 Mega Pixels	38-114mm f/3.5-4.5	Auto Program 11 Scene	Auto 80-1000	No 2.5	SD 15 LI	94 x 57 x 17.5mm 142g	**PROS** Easy to use, good design and quick start-up **CONS** Design not to all tastes, imaging specs suffer	Image quality and features aren't much to write home about, but the NV3 proves itself as an innovative and effective package at a good price.	83%	TESTED TESTS 06
	BenQ T700	£145 (£365 rrp)	7 Mega Pixels	375-1125mm f/2.7-5.2	Auto 28 Scene	Auto 80-1600	No 3	SD 12 LI	91 x 60 x 14.7mm 120g	**PROS** Image quality, Design, Large touch-screen LCD **CONS** Operational speed	Great image quality and a gorgeous design, not to mention a 3in LCD touch-screen make the T700 one of the best and most affordable touch-screen compacts we've tested in a long time. Clear icons and intuitive in operation also make the T700 a winner.	88% What Digital Camera	TESTED OCT 2007
	BenQ C1000	£145 (£250 rrp)	10 Mega Pixels	38-108mm f/2.8-5.1	Program Aperture Shutter Manual 13 Scene	Auto 64-200	No 2.4	SD AA	89 x 60.5 x 32.7mm 140g	**PROS** Price, large monitor, wide range of exposure modes **CONS** Battery usage high, purple fringing, max ISO 200	The C1000 delivers good results and has a generally high spec, but just make sure you stock up on rechargeable batteries.	83%	TESTED MAY 2007
	Fujifilm Z5fd	£145 (£200 rrp)	6 Mega Pixels	36-108mm f/3.5-4.2	Auto 18 Scene	Auto 100-1600	No 2.5	xD LI	93 x 55 x 19mm 148g	**PROS** Slim, sexy design, fast start up and AF, manual option for greater control **CONS** Shame there's not a black option, slow zoom action that whines a bit	Stunning looks with performance to match make the Z5fd much more than the 'average' style camera and at a good price too. Image quality is great for 5x7in prints and at low ISOs can even turn in good results at a 10x8in print size.	87% What Digital Camera	TESTED APR 2007
	Sony W55	£150 (£170 rrp)	7 Mega Pixels	38-114mm f/2.8-5.2	Auto 7 Scene	Auto 100-1000	No 2.5	MS 56 LI	89 x 57 x 23mm 116g		In true Sony style, the W55 looks the part with its aluminium casing, while a 7MP sensor, Noise Reduction processing technology and High Sensitivity mode take care of images.		NOT YET TESTED
	Canon A560	£150 (£290 rrp)	7 Mega Pixels	35-140mm f/2.6-5.5	Auto Manual 11 Scene	Auto 80-1600	Yes 2.5	SD AA	91 x 64 x 43mm 165g	**PROS** Fast processor, Image Quality **CONS** AA batteries, Maybe be a little bulky for some	Driven by the latest Digic III processor, offering manual control and producing fantastic images, the A560 is one of the finest mid-range compacts around. A 4x optical zoom and the inclusion of face-detection ice the proverbial cake.	89% What Digital Camera	TESTED OCT 2007

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				LENS	EXP MODES	ISO	VIEW/LCD (in)	MEMORY/BATT	SIZE / WEIGHT	PROS & CONS	SUMMARY	SCORE	
	Kodak Z612	£150 (£300 rrp)	6 Mega Pixels	35-420mm f/2.8-4.8	Program Aperture Shutter Manual Auto 16 Scene	Auto 80-800	Evf 2.5	SD 32 LI	104 x 74 x 69mm 300g	PROS User friendly, versatile lens, good range of scene and manual modes CONS Clunky operation, poor shutter button design, a few image quality quirks	A pleasing camera that lives up to its 'superzoom' tag. Some image quality and operational quirks	85% What Digital Camera RECOMMENDED	TESTED SEP 2006
	Olympus Mju 760	£150 (£200 rrp)	7 Mega Pixels	37-111mm f/3.4-5.7	Auto 22 Scene	Auto 64-1600	No 2.5	xD 18 LI	99 x 54 x 24.4mm 120g	PROS Weatherproof, choice of colours, comes with a 512MB xD card CONS Noisy across ISO range, over-sharpened images	Great for modest print sizes but nothing much to shout about, making it a rather average camera	83%	TESTED JUN 2007
	Ricoh R5	£150 (£280 rrp)	7 Mega Pixels	28-200mm f/3.3-4.8 Stabilised	Program 9 Scene	Auto 64-1600	No 2.5	SD 26 LI	96 x 55 x 26mm 140g	PROS Great lens, image stabilisation, high ISO CONS Design, noise at high ISO, no viewfinder	The R5 offers something different in a compact form without compromising much on image quality	87% What Digital Camera RECOMMENDED	TESTED NOV 2006
	HP R837	£150 (£180 rrp)	7 Mega Pixels	39-118mm f/3.5-4.2	Program 12 Scene	Auto 100-400	No 3	SD 32 LI	100 x 64 x 27mm 155g		Metal-shelled 'style' camera featuring plenty of in-camera enhancement options such as a slimming mode, adaptive lighting and 'pet-eye' reduction		NOT YET TESTED
	Casio EX-Z700	£150 (£200 rrp)	7 Mega Pixels	38-114mm f/2.7-5.2	Program 37 Scene	Auto 50-400	No 2.7	SD 8 LI	88 x 57 x 20.5mm 112g		Casio claims long battery life and an extra-bright 2.7in LCD screen on this well-specified slimline model. Also featuring a 7MP sensor, the camera boasts Anti-shake DSP and a BEST SHOT mode.		NOT YET TESTED
	Olympus FE-200	£150 (£170 rrp)	6 Mega Pixels	28-140mm f/3.3-4.8	Program 13 Scene	Auto 64-400	No 2.5	xD 24 LI	97 x 59 x 27mm 155g	PROS Fully automatic, impressive zoom CONS Primitive image quality, feeble flash	If you just want a point-and-shoot and to make 5x7in prints, that's what the FE-200 does, and the zoom range is impressive	76%	TESTED FEB 2007
	Casio EX-Z1050	£150 (£230 rrp)	10 Mega Pixels	38-117mm f/2.8-8	Program 38 Scene	Auto 80-800	No 2.6	SD LI	91 x 57 x 24mm 125g	PROS Image quality, bright LCD, good battery life CONS Small buttons	Simple to use and produces good quality images, even at high ISO settings. The buttons are a tad on the small side but operational speed is good, as is the battery life. Perfect for a novice who expects quality.	87% What Digital Camera RECOMMENDED	TESTED JUN 2007
	Olympus FE-240	£150 (£180 rrp)	7 Mega Pixels	38-190mm f/3.3-5.0	Auto 15 Scene	Auto 50-1000	No 2.5	xD 20 LI	93.5 x 56 x 20mm 115g		Displaying clear images even in bright conditions and with a real feeling of build quality, the FE-240 further impresses with its 5x optical zoom but is let down by flat and cold images and a confusing menu system.		NOT YET TESTED
	Sony W80	£155 (£199 rrp)	7 Mega Pixels	35-105mm f/2.8-5.2	Program 7 Scene	Auto 100-3200	Yes 2.5	MS 31 LI	91 x 58 x 22.9mm 124g		Sony's successful W series continues with this 7MP compact, featuring Double Anti-blur technology, a HD output, face Detection and a 9 point AF system. Also features a viewfinder above its 2.5in LCD screen.		NOT YET TESTED
												84%	TESTED JUN 2007
	Panasonic LZ7	£160 (£190 rrp)	7 Mega Pixels	37-222mm f/2.8-4.5	Auto 19 Scene	Auto 100-3200	No 2.5	SD 27 AA	98.5 x 62.3 x 33.1mm 180g		Similar to the LZ6 but with a larger LCD screen. The same Venus III processing engine features, as does the 6x optical zoom and Mega OIS Image Stabilisation.		NOT YET TESTED
	Nikon S6	£165 (£350 rrp)	6 Mega Pixels	35-105mm f/3-5.4	Program 4 Subject 11 Scene	Auto 50-400	No 3	SD 20 LI	101 x 60 x 21mm 140g	PROS Nice design, good AF, WiFi CONS LCD hard to see in bright light, limited control, expensive	This WiFi enabled model is a pretty performer boasting features that appeal to the more tech-savvy user rather than the photographer	86% What Digital Camera RECOMMENDED	TESTED JUN 2006
	Kodak V610	£165 (£350 rrp)	6 Mega Pixels	38-114mm f/3.9-4.4 130-380mm f/4.8	Auto Portrait 21 Scene	Auto 64-800	No 2.8	SD 32 LI	111 x 55 x 23.2mm 160g		Dual-lens with a 10x optical zoom as well as a 2.8in LCD and Bluetooth technology. Other features include a panorama stitching mode, plenty of scene modes and an advanced video mode.		NOT YET TESTED
	Nikon S7c	£165 (£300 rrp)	7 Mega Pixels	35-105mm f/2.8-5	Program 11 Scene	Auto 50-1600	No 3	SD LI	101 x 60 x 21mm 140g	PROS Styling, extensive features list, good handling and performance CONS Loss of detail when enlarged, poor ISO 1600 performance, no redeye fix	On paper, the S7c has almost everything you need on a point-and-shooter, and delivers as long as you don't enlarge the images too much.	84%	TESTED JAN 2007
	Nikon S500	£170 (£250 rrp)	7 Mega Pixels	35-105mm f/2.8-4.7 Stabilised	Auto 15 Scene	Auto 50-2000	No 2.5	SD 20 LI	88 x 51 x 22mm 150g	PROS Great design, anti-reflective LCD, vibration reduction CONS Bland zoom range, noise above ISO 400	A great-looking camera, producing good images at low ISO settings with a reasonable price tag, the S500 proves to be a worthy toys-r-rival. An expansive ISO range and optical based Vibration Reduction make it great value for money too.	87% What Digital Camera RECOMMENDED	TESTED JUN 2007
	Pentax W30	£170 (£200 rrp)	7 Mega Pixels	38-114mm f/3.3-4	Auto Program 25 Scene	Auto 64-3200	No 2.5	SD 21 LI	54 x 107.5 x 23.5mm 140g	PROS Waterproof, ease of use, noise control CONS Design, average performance	Unfortunately the W30 doesn't quite qualify as a camera for all-round usability, as its waterproof housing makes for rather tedious operation, but it is easy to use and if you will utilise its waterproof capabilities then it's definitely worth a look.	80%	TESTED SEP 2007
	Samsung i70	£170 (£200 rrp)	7 Mega Pixels	38-114mm f/3.5-4.5	Auto Program 11 Scene	Auto 80-1000	No 3	SD 10 LI	89.7 x 61 x 21.5mm 186g	PROS Aberration control, operational speed, useful features CONS Unnecessary extras, soft images, handling	There's no doubt a small demographic will appreciate the i70's novelty value and multi-purpose functionality but, as is the case with a lot of all-in-one', the i70's doesn't particularly excel in any area, with handling being the biggest disappointment.	81%	TESTED SEP 2007
	Canon A630	£175 (£270 rrp)	8 Mega Pixels	35-140mm f/2.8-4.1	Program Aperture Shutter Manual Custom 13 Scene	Auto 80-800	Yes 2.5	SD AA	109 x 66 x 49.1mm 245g		Canon continues to improve on its popular A range, with this model offering a vari-angle LCD and a host of photographic controls. The 8MP sensor is also joined by a 9AIAF system and 21 scene modes.		NOT YET TESTED
	Kodak V705	£180 (£280 rrp)	7 Mega Pixels	23mm f/2.8 39-117mm f/3.9-4.4	Auto Custom 20 Scene	Auto 50-1000	No 2.5	SD 32 LI	101 x 50 x 20mm 124g	PROS Ultra wide angle lens, slim-line, user friendly CONS No viewfinder, over-processed images, fiddly body controls	With a dual lens offering a super wide 23mm option, this is an intuitive and easy to use point-and-shooter that'll suit photographers seeking an enhanced focal range.	84%	TESTED DEC 2006
	Olympus Mju 740	£180 (£280 rrp)	7 Mega Pixels	36-180mm f/3.3-5	Auto 23 Scene	Auto 80-1600	No 2.5	xD 17 LI	96 x 54 x 24mm 114g	PROS Exposure modes, Zoom range CONS Image quality, Mode dial	A 5x optical zoom and a weatherproof body impress, but images from the mju 740, though well exposed, suffer from poor corner-sharpness and noise. ISO-based image stabilisation is a bonus, though.	84%	TESTED OCT 2007

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				LENS	EXP MODES	ISO	VIEW/LCD (in)	MEMORY/BATT	SIZE / WEIGHT	PROS & CONS	SUMMARY	SCORE	
	Pentax T30	£180 (£300 rrp)	7 Mega Pixels	38-113mm f/2.7-5.2	Auto Program 11 Scene	Auto 64-3200	No 3.0	SD U	95 x 57 x 19mm 120g	**PROS** User-friendly layout, plenty of useful features, large LCD **CONS** Loss of detail, fiddly buttons, not a great improvement over its predecessor	Great features and a lighter and smaller shell than the T20 model it replaces. Simple to use, but image quality though good, isn't the greatest. With enough light, pleasing images may be captured but fringing and plenty of noise are evident at higher settings.	84%	TESTED JUN 2007
	Olympus Mju 725 SW	£180 (£300 rrp)	7 Mega Pixels	38-114mm f/3.5-5	Program 25 Scene	Auto 80-1600	No 2.5	xD U	91 x 59 x 20mm 149g	**PROS** Solid build and feel, shockproof and waterproof **CONS** Fringing, lens flare, noise, camera shake, price	Outwardly desirable, but pictures lack punch. Still, when dropped from arm level, the camera gives hope to the butter-fingered by coming back for more	84%	TESTED DEC 2006
	Canon IXUS 70	£180 (£250 rrp)	7 Mega Pixels	35-105mm f/2.8-4.9	Auto Manual 12 Scene	Auto 80-1600	Yes 2.5	SD U	85.9 x 53.5 x 19.4mm 125g	**PROS** Beautiful design, fast AF and image review, colour accent feature **CONS** Image softness in edge of frame, lacks the specification of similar cameras	While the IXUS 70 may seem pricey for its specification, the design and build are excellent and make it worth every penny. Accurate white balance and solid metering produce good images but edge sharpness is noticeable and so is a little fringing.	88% What Digital Camera RECOMMENDED	TESTED JUL 07
	Panasonic FX30	£180 (£280 rrp)	7 Mega Pixels	28-100mm f/2.8-5.6	Auto Program 20 Scene	Auto 100-3200	No 2.5	SD 27 U	94.9 x 51.9 x 22 mm 132g	**PROS** Mega OIS, size, design, ease of use **CONS** No major upgrade	There hasn't been much in terms of improvements in the FX30, but this is largely due to previous models' competence. If you want a good-looking compact with a wideangle lens that takes cracking photos, you'd be hard pushed to find better than the FX30	90% What Digital Camera GOLD AWARD	TESTED SEP 2007
	Ricoh R6	£180 (£230 rrp)	7 Mega Pixels	28-200mm f/3.3-5.1	Auto 12 Scene	Auto 64-1600	No 2.7	SD 54 U	99 x 55 x 23.3mm 135g		The slimmest compact camera on the market with a 28-200mm optical zoom also features Face-Recognition, Vibration Correction and a 2.7in LCD screen. A 1cm macro mode as as well as ISO capabilities stretching to 1600 also feature.		NOT YET TESTED
	Pentax A30	£185 (£200 rrp)	10 Mega Pixels	38-114mm f/2.8-5.4	Auto Program Shutter 15 Scene	Auto 64-3200	No 2.5	SD 22 U	57.5 x 89.5 x 23.5mm 150g		The best of both worlds: a compact body with a greater degree of manual control, as well as three types of Shake Reduction and a 10MP sensor. In addition, an MPEG4 video mode is also available.		NOT YET TESTED
	Samsung NV10	£185 (£280 rrp)	10 Mega Pixels	35-105mm f/2.8-5.1	Program Manual 11 Scene	Auto 100-1000	No 2.5	SD 20 U	96 x 60 x 19mm 149g	**PROS** Superb operating speed, great build and handling, looks **CONS** Noise levels/ 'mushy' detail, no aperture or shutter priority modes	Samsung's NV10 is exquisitely made, beautiful to look at and a real joy to use – it's such a shame the image quality doesn't quite match the design. Despite that, and as is the case with the NV7 model, you do get a lot for your money.	86% What Digital Camera RECOMMENDED	TESTED FEB 2007
	Samsung SI050	£185 (£200 rrp)	10 Mega Pixel	38-190mm f/2.8-4.4	Program Aperture Shutter Manual Auto 11 Scene	Auto 80-1600	No 3.0	SD AA	105 x 64 x 26mm 204g		A 3in LCD screen and MV style black finish help this 10MP point-and-shooter stand out from the crowd. Full manual control, 45MB internal memory and ISO capabilities of up to 1600 also feature, rounding off an impressive spec.		NOT YET TESTED
	Samsung L74	£190 (£229 rrp)	7 Mega Pixels	28-101mm f/2.8-5.6	Auto Program 11 Scene	Auto 80-1600	No 3	SD 450 U	104.5 x 61.8 x 21.8mm 174g	**PROS** 28mm wideangle lens, lens design **CONS** Image quality, bulky body, poor touch-screen LCD	Bulky body and temperamental touch-screen disappoint with the L74. Images are hard to view in bright conditions though the inclusion and design of the 28mm wideangle lens is a bonus.	78%	TESTED JUL 2007
	Canon IXUS i7	£190 (£250 rrp)	7 Mega Pixels	38-90mm f/3.2-5.4	Auto Manual 13 Scene	Auto 80-1600	No 1.8	SD U	96.1 x 45.1 x 23.9mm 105g	**PROS** Face detection, compact design, easy to use **CONS** Low-light performance, relatively high RRP	This stylish compact is great for snaps on the go. More-ambitious photographers should look higher up the DIXIS range. Having said that, the camera does cope well even in darker conditions while its diminutive shell comes in four stylish colours.	84%	TESTED MAR 2007
	Olympus FE-250	£190 (£200 rrp)	8 Mega Pixels	35-105mm f/2.8-4.7	Program Auto 15 Scene	Auto 64-3200	No 2.5	xD 20 U	94 x 57 x 17mm 115g	**PROS** Size, simplicity, image quality at low ISO **CONS** Noise at higher ISO settings, navigation issues	The FE-250 doesn't pretend to be anything it isn't and what it does it does well. It's diminutive size and exposure options make it a winner, with the only concerns being with the highest ISO settings and a few difficulties with menu navigation	87% What Digital Camera RECOMMENDED	TESTED SEP 2007
	Canon A710 IS	£190 (£200 rrp)	7 Mega Pixels	35-210mm f/2.8-4.8 Stabilised	Auto Program Aperture Shutter Manual 17 Scene	Auto 80-800	Yes 2.5	SD AA	98 x 67 x 41mm 210g	**PROS** Metering and auto WB accuracy, wide range of shooting modes, zoom range and IS **CONS** Would like a flip-out LCD, power hungry	A fully featured model with image-stabilised 6x zoom to prevent camera shake and full manual control should you need it. A great model for the ambitious user but also suited for general snapshots. A little too 'power-hungry' though.	89% What Digital Camera RECOMMENDED	TESTED APR 2007
	Canon IXUS 75	£195 (£280 rrp)	7 Mega Pixels	37-111mm f/2.8-4.9	Auto Manual 17 Scene	Auto 80-1600	No 3	SD U	92 x 57 x 20mm 130g	**PROS** Noise control, ISO range, speed of operation **CONS** Fringing, small buttons	An ideal accompaniment for a night out or just for general use, the IXUS 75 is a slim, no-nonsense compact with a good ISO range and a nice large LCD screen – a couple of trivial issues are more than compensated for by great images and speed	85% What Digital Camera RECOMMENDED	TESTED SEP 2007
	Sony T20	£200 (£250 rrp)	8 Mega Pixels	38-114mm f/3.5-4.3	Auto Program 8 Scene	Auto 80-3200	No 2.5	MS 31 U	89.7 x 55.7 x 22.8mm 127g		Great ISO range and a slim, sexy body make this the ideal camera to take on a night out. Highlights include Double Anti-blur technology, Face Detection and an HD output, ahead of an 8MP sensor.		NOT YET TESTED
	Nikon P3	£200 (£350 rrp)	8 Mega Pixels	36-126mm f/2.7-5.3 Stabilised	Program Aperture Auto 16 Scene	Auto 50-400	No 2.5	SD U	92 x 61 x 31mm 170g	**PROS** Chunky and easy to hold, well exposed and well focussed results **CONS** Unnecessary WiFi feature?	This is a lovely little camera that's been hijacked by the latest trend accessory – WiFi – which is a questionable addition. A lovely partner for your holiday snaps but equally good for more serious work too.	84%	TESTED JAN 2006
	Olympus Mju 750	£200 (£300 rrp)	7 Mega Pixels	36-180mm f/3.3-5.0	Auto 23 Scene	Auto 80-1600	No 2.5	xD 17 U	96 x 54 x 24.3mm 120g	**PROS** Exposures, Operational Speed, BrightCapture Technology **CONS** Handling, Small Buttons, LCD visibility in bright light	A noticeable improvement in image quality over the mju 740 model, despite almost the same specification. The 5x optical zoom together with Dual Image Stabilisation give the camera something to shout about, while images turn out as they should.	86% What Digital Camera RECOMMENDED	TESTED OCT 2007
	Panasonic FZ8	£200 (£300 rrp)	7 Mega Pixels	36-432mm f/2.8-3.1	Program Aperture Shutter Manual 20 Scene	Auto 100-3200	Yes 2.5	SD U	113 x 72 x 79mm 310g	**PROS** Raw option, Mini-DSLR styling, Speed of use **CONS** Aggressive noise reduction, A little too small for some	The FZ8 has a feature-set suited to a wide range of applications, and as an 'all-rounder' it's definitely one to consider. It offers a lot for £300 but it's best sticking to low ISO settings as noise reduction tarnishes images shot at higher settings.	88% What Digital Camera RECOMMENDED	TESTED APR 2007
	Casio EX-V7	£200 (£300 rrp)	7 Mega Pixels	38-266mm f/3.4-5.6	Program Aperture Shutter Manual Best Shot	Auto 64-800	No 2.5	SD 11 U	95.5 x 59.8 x 25.5mm 149g	**PROS** Design, menu system **CONS** Image quality, price	The feature-laden EX-V7 impresses in design and use, and full manual-shooting control is offered as a bonus. Unfortunately, poor image quality lets it down.	80%	TESTED JUL 2007
	Samsung i7	£200 (£269 rrp)	7 Mega Pixels	38-114mm f/3.5-4.5	Auto Program 15 Scene	Auto 80-1600	No 3	SD U	101 x 60 x 22mm 185g		With its 3in rotating LCD screen and touch-screen technology, the i7 is the gadget fan's dream camera. The i7 also features Advanced Shake Reduction and Wise Shot modes while carrying a top ISO of 1600.		NOT YET TESTED
NEW	Samsung L77	£200 (£250 rrp)	7 Mega Pixels	38-266mm f/3.5-5.4	Program 11 Scene	Auto 50-1600	No 2.5	SD 20 U	94 x 57 x 21mm 135g		LOOK OUT FOR OUR REVIEW IN NEXT MONTH'S ISSUE		COMING SOON...

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				LENS	EXP MODES	ISO	VIEW/LCD (in)	MEMORY/BATT	SIZE / WEIGHT	PROS & CONS	SUMMARY	SCORE	
NEW	Olympus FE-300	£200 (£200 rrp)	12 Mega Pixels	35-105mm f/2.8-4.7	Auto 17 Scene	tbc	No 2.5	xD LI	tbc		Sitting at the top of Olympus's FE range, the FE-300 offers a 12MP sensor and Face-Detection together with BrightCapture technology, ISO-based stabilisation and the latest TruePic III processor.		NOT YET TESTED
	Samsung NV7 OPS	£210 (£300 rrp)	7 Mega Pixels	38-270mm f/2.8-4 Stabilised	Program Aperture Shutter Manual 11 Scene	Auto 100-1000	No 2.5	SD LI	106 x 62 x 21mm 245g	PROS Gorgeous design, Optical Picture Stabilisation, attractive price CONS Prefer a slightly wider zoom, noisy images, mushy detail	A top spec and great build/design is undermined by second-rate image quality that screams out for a Raw capture option. Noise is apparent even on ISO 200 while fringing and lack of detail also make themselves known, letting the NV7 down.	87% What Digital Camera	TESTED FEB 2007
	Sony T50	£210 (£270 rrp)	7 Mega Pixels	38-114mm f/3.5-4.3 Stabilised	Program 10 Scene	Auto 80-1000	No 3	MS 56 LI	95 x 57 x 23mm 130g		Another of Sony's good looking T series cameras, this one features a high ISO and Super Steady Shot image stabilisation as well as a touch-sensitive 3in LCD screen and sliding lens cover.		NOT YET TESTED
NEW	Panasonic FX-33	£210 (£250 rrp)	8 Mega Pixels	28-100mm f/2.8-5.6	Program 20 Scene	Auto 100-6400	No 2.5	SD 27 LI	94.9 x 51.9 x 22mm		One of three new Lumix models, with an Intelligent Auto feature, 28mm wideangle lens, latest Venus III processing engine and multitude of scene modes. Face Detection also features, as does an 8MP sensor while the camera comes in a choice of four colours.		NOT YET TESTED
	Canon A640	£215 (£330 rrp)	10 Mega Pixels	35-140mm f/2.8-4.1	Auto Program Aperture Shutter Manual 14 Scene	Auto 80-800	Yes 2.5	SD AA	109 x 66 x 49mm 245g	PROS Sharp images, vari-angle LCD, ultra reliable white balance and metering CONS Some fringing, no image stabilisation, poor battery life with alkaline cells	The A640 delivers a generally comparable feature set to the G7 and, while its images are noisier, they also appear sharper. Arguably a nicer camera than the G7. The white balance and metering are ultra-reliable.	86% What Digital Camera	TESTED JAN 2007
	Panasonic TZ2	£215 (£270 rrp)	6 Mega Pixels	28-280mm f/3.3-4.9	Auto 21 Scene	Auto 100-3200	No 2.5	SD LI	105 x 59.2 x 36.7mm 222g		The same fantastic 10x optical zoom range as the TZ1 but with a 28mm wideangle lens. Mega OIS stabilisation promise to deliver sharp, clear images at even the telephoto end of the zoom range while ISO capabilities stretch to 3200.		NOT YET TESTED
	Canon IXUS 900Ti	£225 (£349 rrp)	10 Mega Pixels	37-111mm f/2.8-4.9	Auto Manual 11 Scene	Auto 80-3200	Yes 2.5	SD LI	91 x 60 x 28mm 165g	PROS Excellent build and styling, fast AF, superb white balance and metering CONS Lacks 'true' wideangle, Noise	A fantastic camera to use, but this doesn't outweigh the high noise and low detail delivered by a sensor that has more pixels than it needs. It's not bad value for money, but there are cheaper 10MP compacts that would also warrant a look.	84%	TESTED APR 2007
	Sony T100	£225 (£330 rrp)	8 Mega Pixels	35-175mm f/3.5-4.4	Program 9 Scene	Auto 80-3200	No 3	MS 31 LI	91.8 x 59.2 x 22.3mm 141g		Sony's new 'must-have' model – 5x optical zoom plus a 3in LCD screen is coupled with HD output and driven by a Bionz imaging processor. Available in black, red and silver, the model offers a great deal of spec in a slim and sexy shell.		NOT YET TESTED
	Canon IXUS 850 IS	£225 (£330 rrp)	7 Mega Pixels	28-105mm f/2.8-5.8 Stabilised	Auto Manual 10 Scene	Auto 80-1600	Yes 2.5	SD LI	89 x 58 x 25mm 150g	PROS Speed of use, stylish design, image stabilisation, superb WB and metering CONS Lack of image detail, noise at 1600, corner softness/fringing at 28mm	A beautiful camera to use, with plenty of creative options for the enthusiast. At lower ISO settings and modest print sizes it's a stunner, with bulletproof white balance and exposures, but it struggles at higher ISOs in terms of noise and lack of detail.	88% What Digital Camera	TESTED FEB 2007
	Nikon P5000	£230 (£330 rrp)	10 Mega Pixels	36-126mm f/2.7-5.3	Program Aperture Shutter Manual 16 Scene	Auto 64-3200	Yes 2.5	SD LI	98 x 65 x 41mm 200g	PROS Vibration reduction, comprehensive feature set, good price CONS No Raw mode, would prefer an all-metal body	With a DSLR-style feature-set, the P5000 looks like a great all-rounder and an alternative to Canon's G7. Image quality is great and the inclusion of Vibration Reduction is a bonus but a Raw mode and better noise control would have made it a real stunner.	86% What Digital Camera	TESTED JUN 2007
NEW	Samsung i85	£230 (£tbc rrp)	8 Mega Pixels	36-180 mm f/3.5-4.9	Auto Program 14 Scene	Auto 80-1600	No 3	SD 173 LI	95 x 61.5 x 20.2mm tbc		Latest multimedia compact from Samsung featuring a 3in LCD touch-screen, 450MB internal memory and Face Recognition Technology. Samsung's Advanced Shake Reduction mode features, as does an ISO range stretching to 1600.		NOT YET TESTED
	Olympus Mju 1000	£230 (£275 rrp)	10 Mega Pixels	35-105mm f/2.8-4.7	Program Auto 20 Scene	Auto 64-6400	No 2.5	xD 28 LI	97 x 56 x 23mm 140g	PROS Solid weatherproof body, comes with a 1GB xD card, price CONS Overly noisy at all ISO settings, inconsistent WB, not the fastest AF	While the price and specifications are definitely right, the Mju 1000 is let down by iffy white balance and exposure, plus high noise levels throughout the ISO range. Considering you get a free 1GB xD card and a weatherproof body, it's still good value for money.	86% What Digital Camera	TESTED FEB 2007
	Nikon S10	£230 (£300 rrp)	6 Mega Pixels	38-380mm f/3.5 Stabilised	Auto 14 Scene	Auto 50-800	No 2.5	SD 16 AA	67 x 26 x 67mm 220g	PROS VR mode, face detection, versatile handling, good level of image quality, optical ability CONS Unwieldy body style, poor zoom control	The S10 provides a good-value compromise between compact and superzoom. User friendly and versatile, it combines crisp, reliable imaging with quality features	85% What Digital Camera	TESTED TEST 06
NEW	Panasonic FX-55	£235 (£280 rrp)	8 Mega Pixels	28-100mm f/2.8-5.6	Program 20 Scene	Auto 100-6400	No 3	SD 27 LI	94.9 x 57.1 x 22mm 143g		Much the same camera as the FX33 model but with a 3in LCD screen. The same Venus III processing engine features while the Intelligent Auto mode promises to turn out accurately exposed images. A wideangle lens and Mega OIS also feature.		NOT YET TESTED
	Sony N2	£240 (£350 rrp)	10 Mega Pixels	38-114mm f/2.8-5.4	Auto Program Manual 8 Scene	Auto 100-1600	No 3	MS 25 LI	97 x 61 x 23mm 151g	PROS Touch screen, solid construction CONS Low-resolution preview, limited zoom	Aside from the touch-screen LCD and a tough construction, the Sony N2 is nothing special. Noise is well controlled under ISO 400, but a short zoom range and mediocre images let it down.	81%	TESTED JAN 2007
NEW	FujiFilm S5800	£240 (£tbc rrp)	8 Mega Pixels	38-380mm f/3.5-3.7	Program Aperture Shutter Manual Auto 12 Scene	Auto 64-1600	Evf 2.5	xD/ SD 26 AA	106 x 78 x 81mm 307g		Succeding the S5700 model, the S5800 offers the same great feature set, 10x optical zoom, manual control and flash options but, at least on paper, doesn't look like any major improvement over the previous model.		NOT YET TESTED
	Panasonic TZ3	£245 (£300 rrp)	7 Mega Pixels	28-280mm f/3.3-4.9	Auto 21 Scene	Auto 100-3200	No 3	SD 12 LI	105 x 59.2 x 36.7mm 232g	PROS 28mm wideangle zoom, 16:9 panoramic shooting, operating speed CONS Aggressive noise reduction	With a sensible resolution and sensor size combined with a useful wide zoom, the TZ3 ticks a lot of the right boxes. Only niggle is the slightly aggressive image processing, but other than that it's a cracker	89% What Digital Camera	TESTED MAY 2007
	Casio EX-Z1200	£245 (£280 rrp)	12 Mega Pixels	37-111mm f/2.8-5.5	Auto Best Shot	Auto 50-3200	No 2.8	SD 11 LI			One of the latest style-oriented 12MP compacts to hit the shelves, and the current flagship Exilim zoom model, Casio's EX-Z1200 features sensor-based image stabilisation as well as a wide 2.8in LCD screen and 33 BESTSHOT modes to handle exposure.		NOT YET TESTED
	Samsung NV11	£250 (£300 rrp)	10 Mega Pixels	38-190mm f/2.8-4.4	Program Aperture Shutter Manual Auto 11 Scene	Auto 80-1600	No 2.7	SD LI	107 x 64 x 22mm 195g		A 10MP sensor and 5x optical zoom are housed inside another of Samsung's gorgeous NV models. Face Recognition and Advanced Shake Reduction feature alongside a the Smart Touch user interface while a decent ISO range rounds off the spec.		NOT YET TESTED
	Canon IXUS 950 IS	£250 (£330 rrp)	8 Mega Pixels	35-140mm f/2.8-5.5	Auto Manual 12 Scene	Auto 80-1600	Yes 2.5	SD LI	90.4 x 56.5 x 26.4mm	PROS Image quality, start-up and shooting time, design and handling CONS Heavy, somewhat overpriced	The IXUS 950 IS continues the tradition of the IXUS brand in delivering quality, but the price tag is somewhat prohibitive considering it doesn't offer a great deal more than the much cheaper IXUS 70 and 75 models.	87% What Digital Camera	TESTED SEP 2007

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					LENS	EXP MODES	ISO	VIEW/LCD (in)	MEMORY/BATT	SIZE / WEIGHT	PROS & CONS	SUMMARY	SCORE	
NEW		Samsung NV 20	£250 (£250 rrp)	12 Mega Pixels	34-102mm f/2.8-5.2	Program Manual Auto 11 Scene	Auto 80-3200	No 2.5	SD 20 U	96.5 x 60 x 18.6mm 152g		Along with two further models within the range set for release later in the year, the NV range gets a 12 megapixel member, featuring a refined Smart Touch User Interface, maximum ISO 3200 and Advanced Shake Reduction technology.		NOT YET TESTED
NEW		Casio EX-S880	£250 (£250 rrp)	8 Mega Pixels	38-114mm f/2.7-5.2	Program 39 Scene (BEST SHOT)	Auto 64-400	No 2.8	SD 11 U	94.5 x 60.4 x 17.3mm 128g		A high-quality movie setting together with a mode specifically designed for the easy capture and uploading to movie-sharing site YouTube feature on the EX-S880, alongside an 8MP sensor, Face Detection and high-speed continuous shooting mode.		NOT YET TESTED
		Fujifilm S9600	£250 (£300 rrp)	9 Mega Pixels	28-300mm f/2.8-4.9	Program Aperture Shutter Manual Auto 5 Scene	Auto 80-1600	Evf 2	xD/ CF AA	128 x 93 x 29mm 650g	**PROS** Zoom range, flash sync socket, AA batteries **CONS** No optical image stabilisation, aggressive noise reduction	The Fujifilm S9600 is not a bad camera, but it doesn't bring anything new to the bridge camera genre. The tweaked algorithms and marginally larger LCD don't really justify it as an 'upgraded' model.	86% What Digital Camera RECOMMENDED	TESTED MAR 2007
		Olympus Mju 770 SW	£260 (£300 rrp)	7 Mega Pixels	38-114mm f/3.5-5	Program 23 Scene	Auto 80-1600	No 2.5	xD 18 U	92 x 59 x 21mm 155g	**PROS** Metal body capable of taking all kinds of abuse, great design, large and bright LCD **CONS** Slightly noisy at the higher end of the ISO scale	Another world first from Olympus. This Mju is waterproof to 10m, shockproof from 1.5m, freezeproof to -10C and crushproof to 100kg. Ideal for clumsy fat Eskimos then!	88% What Digital Camera RECOMMENDED	TESTED MAY 2007
NEW		Olympus Mju 1200	£270 (£270 rrp)	12 Mega Pixels	35-105mm f/2.8-4.7	tbc 20 Scene	tbc	No 2.7	xD U	tbc		The first 12MP compact in Olympus's mju range, featuring Face Detection and Shadow Adjustment technologies while a 2.7in HyperCrystal LCD screen and BrightCapture technology take care of clarity and visibility in low-light situations.		NOT RELEASED
		Olympus SP-550UZ	£280 (£375 rrp)	7 Mega Pixels	28-504mm f/2.8-4.5 Stabilised	Program Aperture Shutter Manual Auto 23 Scene	Auto 50-5000	Evf 2.5	xD 20 AA	116 x 79 x 78mm 365g	**PROS** Zoom range, DSLR style features, ergonomic rubberised grip **CONS** Slow writing Raw files, noisy images	There are numerous superzoom cameras on the market, but none matches the Olympus SP-550UZ's zoom range and if you can accept the slightly high noise levels it's certainly one worth considering	86% What Digital Camera RECOMMENDED	TESTED MAY 2007
		Panasonic FX100	£280 (£330 rrp)	12 Mega Pixels	28-100mm f/2.8-5.6	Auto 23 Scene	Auto 80-6400	No 2.5	SD 27 U	96.7 x 54 x 24.5mm 148g	**PROS** Mega OIS lens stabilisation, 'Easy-zoom' feature, build and design **CONS** A bit pricey for the 'point-and-shoot' spec, colours can be a bit drab, overly aggressive noise reduction	Great image quality and gorgeous design make the FX100 another winner in Panasonic's line-up. Noise is much better controlled than expected for such a high-resolution compact, helped, perhaps in part, by Panasonic's latest Venus III processing engine.	86% What Digital Camera RECOMMENDED	TESTED AUG 2007
		Sony W200	£280 (£330 rrp)	12 Mega Pixels	35-105mm f/2.8-5.5	Auto Program 9 Scene	Auto 100-3200	Yes 2.5	MS 31 U	91.0 x 58.5 x 27.3mm 142g	**PROS** Design, User interface, Overall competence, General image quality, ISO range **CONS** Corner and edge-sharpness, Standard zoom range, LCD screen pixel count	A fantastic camera with a lot to recommend it, but a low-quality LCD screen and fairly standard zoom range make its price tag seem somewhat inflated. When the price comes down, this will definitely be a compact worth a good look at.	89% What Digital Camera RECOMMENDED	TESTED OCT 2007
		Canon G7	£290 (£450 rrp)	10 Mega Pixels	35-210mm f/2.8-4.8 Stabilised	Program Aperture Shutter Manual Auto 17 Scene	Auto 80-1600	Yes 2.5	SD U	106 x 72 x 43mm 320g	**PROS** Metal body gives solid build, Stabilised zoom covers most purposes, Exposures are spot on **CONS** No Raw, combined with problems resolving fine detail and noise	This model improves on the G6 in almost every way, but is let down by image quality and a lack of Raw. Fewer pixels and a Raw mode would have made this the ultimate digital compact	85% What Digital Camera RECOMMENDED	TESTED JAN 2007
		Panasonic FZ50	£300 (£500 rrp)	10 Mega Pixels	35-420mm f/2.8-3.7	Program Aperture Shutter Manual Auto 16 Scene	Auto 80-3200	Evf 2	SD U	141 x 86 x 142mm 734g	**PROS** Image quality, Lens, Speed, Manual functions **CONS** Electronic viewfinder lag, Size, Noise at high ISO	Offers a high-value alternative for those who don't have the desire or means to invest in a DSLR. High resolution, image stabilisation and lens quality make it a winner, with only noise at higher ISOs and a slightly large build letting it down.	85% What Digital Camera RECOMMENDED	TESTED NOV 2006
		Sony H9	£300 (£360 rrp)	8 Mega Pixels	31-465mm f/2.7-4.5	Program Aperture Shutter Manual Auto 9 Scene	Auto 80-3200	Evf 3	MS 31 U	109.5 x 83.4 x 85.7mm 407g	**PROS** 3in tilting LCD screen, 15x optical zoom, Ergonomic design **CONS** No Raw mode, Aggressive fringing, Small and sluggish evf	With its fantastic 3in tilting LCD screen and zoom range, the H9 no doubt satisfies the needs of its target market. The similar H7 model can be found for around £50 cheaper but sacrifices the tilting LCD screen and Nightshot mode.	85% What Digital Camera RECOMMENDED	TESTED AUG 2007
		Canon S5 IS	£300 (£440 rrp)	8 Mega Pixels	36-432mm f/2.7-3.5	Program Aperture Shutter Manual Auto 13 Scene	Auto 80-1600	Evf 2.5	SD 32 AA	117 x 80 x 77.7mm 450g	**PROS** Nicely balanced, Plenty of features **CONS** Noise, Fringing, Poor low-light performance, Inconsistent image quality	The term 'Jack-of-all-trades' was invented for this camera, and the rest of the cliche also rings true. If you avoid low-light and shadow areas and stick to using it on sunny days you'll be fine, but the camera performs inconsistently in other conditions.	78%	TESTED OCT 2007
NEW		Panasonic FZ18	£350 (£tbc rrp)	8 Mega Pixels	28-504mm f/2.8-4.2	Program Aperture Shutter Manual 15 Scene	Auto 80-6400	Evf 2.5	SD 27 U	117 x 75 x 88mm 360g		LOOK OUT FOR OUR REVIEW IN NEXT MONTH'S ISSUE		NOT YET TESTED
		Sony G1	£350 (£450 rrp)	6 Mega Pixels	38-114mm f/3.5-4.3	Program 10 Scene	Auto 80-1000	No 3.5	MS 2G U	93.3 x 71.7 x 25.3mm 204g		Up to 100 thumbnail-sized images may be viewed at the same time on the G1's huge 3.5in LCD screen, which, along with its whopping 2GB internal memory make this compact set to be a winner.		NOT YET TESTED
		Ricoh GX100	£350 (£400 rrp)	10 Mega Pixels	24-72mm f/2.5-4.4	Program Aperture Manual 8 Scene	Auto 80-1600	Evf 2.5	SD 26 U/ AA	112 x 58 x 25mm 220g	**PROS** Raw shooting, 24mm wideangle setting, 'My Settings' function **CONS** Noisy images (but sharp!), long-winded menu system	Raw shooting along with a removable electronic viewfinder, sharp images and one of the most well-rounded specifications available make the GX100 the best high-end compact camera currently on the market. The 24mm wideangle lens is a bonus too.	90% What Digital Camera GOLD AWARD	TESTED JULY 2007
		Sanyo VPC-HD2	£350 (£500 rrp)	7 Mega Pixels	38-380 mm f/3.5	Program Aperture Shutter Manual Auto 6 Scene	Auto 50-1600	No 2.2	SD U	77.5 x 35 x 117.5mm 185g	**PROS** Good design, Comprehensive manual, Size **CONS** Image quality	Video quality is better than that of a digital compact and the HD2 improves on Sanyo's preceding models and at an improved price. However, its poor image quality affirms its status as a Jack-of-all-trades and a master of none.	82%	TESTED OCT 2007
NEW		Olympus SP-560UZ	£350 (£350 rrp)	8 Mega Pixels	27-486mm f/2.8-4.5	Program Aperture Shutter Manual 22 Scene	tbc	Evf 2.5	xD tbc AA	tbc		Carrying on where the SP-550UZ left off, the SP-560UZ sports a marginally wider lens, extra megapixel and Face Detection to compete with Fuji and Panasonic's equivalent models. Available from next month.		NOT YET TESTED
NEW		Fujifilm S8000fd	£TBC (£tbc rrp)	8 Mega Pixels	27-486mm f/2.8-4.5	Program Aperture Shutter Manual Auto tbc scene	64-6400	Evf 2.5	xD/ SD 58 AA	111 x 78 x 79mm 410g		One of the latest superzoom bridge camera, with an 18x optical zoom, Dual Image Stabilisation, face detection and an ISO range stretching up to 6400. If it performs as well as it sounds then this is sure to make it one hell of a bridge camera!		NOT YET TESTED
		Leica D-Lux 3	£480 (£490 rrp)	10 Mega Pixels	28-112mm f/2.8-4.9 Stabilised	Program Aperture Shutter Manual Auto 17 Scene	Auto 100-1600	No 2.8	SD U	106 x 58 x 26mm 185g	**PROS** 16:9 image ratio, body design, leather case **CONS** Mushy details and colour loss at ISO 400, expensive	You're paying for the brand but it's a good-quality camera with a great design. It's a pity that noise is apparent on higher ISO settings but the Raw mode is a bonus.	83%	TESTED FEB 2006
		Ricoh 500 SE	£550 (£550 rrp)	8 Mega Pixels	28-85mm f/2.5-4.3	Auto 5 Scene	tbc	Yes 2.5	SD 26 U / AA	133 x 78.5 x 74mm 430g		Built like a tank, the 500SE is a heavy-duty outdoor camera with automatic GPS co-ordinate embedding. WiFi version also available		NOT RELEASED

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Everything you need to know to help you make the right choice

What Digital SLR

The digital SLR market is currently enjoying a sales boom, and cameras are now more affordable than ever.

The letters 'SLR' stand for 'single lens reflex' and refer to the viewing system, in which light passes through the lens, is bounced off a 45° mirror, and into the prism where it is turned right-way-round for viewing (so the viewer sees what the lens is seeing). The D in DSLR simply stands for digital. The most distinguishable feature of SLRs (though it isn't unique to them) is that the lenses are interchangeable, enabling the user to fit lenses designed for specific tasks. Hundreds of lenses are available (see Lens listing, p156) along with dozens of other specialised accessories such as flashguns, battery packs and remote triggers. There are other benefits of DSLR ownership, such as better image quality and response times, burst shooting and user control.

BUYING ADVICE: CHOOSING AN SLR

Rule One: Try before you buy!

We would never recommend buying any digital camera without holding it first, but this is especially the case with a working tool such as an SLR. If you already have a 35mm model with some lenses, you may want to stick with that brand, but it's also worth at least considering trading in and starting again. Read all the information on these pages, browse the listings that follow and narrow down your choice to perhaps two or three that fit your needs and budget, then go somewhere that you can compare them side by side. It's also worth checking the *WDC* forums and our Insider's Guide for feedback from existing users. Finally, buy the full test report for any camera featured here, or the back issue in which it appeared, to read all our comments in full.

KEY: THE LISTINGS EXPLAINED

1	Samsung GX-1L	2 £450 (£550 rrp) Body Only	3 6 Mega Pixels CCD 23.5 x 15.7mm	4 P	5 PRSM Auto 6 Sc	6 RAW JPEG	7 200 - 3200	8 GN 15.6 ISO 200	9 Pentamirror 96% Coverage	10 2.5in LCD 230k pixels	11 SD	12 125 x 93 x 67mm 470g	13 PROS Good image quality, ease of use, speed CONS Slight fringing, depth of field preview	14 The GX-1L is getting a bit long in the tooth now, but for the DSLR buyer on the most frugal of budgets, it's easy to use, compact and capable of producing good results	15 88% What Digital Camera RECOMMENDED	16 TESTED MAY 06

1 NEW/OLD MODELS
Brand new products that haven't yet been tested are indicated by a **NEW** in yellow beside the camera.

2 PRICE
A Average street price
B RRP at launch
C Body Only or Kit

3 SENSOR
A Number of pixels
B Sensor type (CCD, CMOS etc)
C Sensor dimensions

4 LENS MOUNT
C = Canon
F = Four-Thirds
N = Nikon
P = Pentax
S = Sigma
A = Sony Alpha

5 EXPOSURE MODES
P = Program
A = Aperture Priority
S = Shutter Priority
M = Manual
Sc = Scene Modes

6 FILE FORMATS
JPEG, RAW
RAW+JPEG, TIFF

7 ISO RANGE
Min to Max

8 FLASH
Guide Number in metres

9 VIEWFINDER
A Type
B Coverage

10 LCD SCREEN
Size
Resolution

11 MEDIA
CF = CompactFlash
SD = Secure Digital
xD = xD Picture Card

12 DIMENSIONS
Length x Height x Depth

13 PROS & CONS
What we like
What we don't

14 COMMENTS
Additional information

15 RATIING
Out of 100%

AWARDS
Recommended (Silver) or Gold Award

16 TESTED
Date of the issue this test appeared in

What Digital Camera GOLD AWARD
GOLD AWARD
For scores over 90%

What Digital Camera RECOMMENDED
RECOMMENDED AWARD
For scores over 85%

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Here are some key features to consider:

Low light capability /ISO speed →

If you're likely to want to shoot in low light, whether it's sunset landscapes or cosy jazz clubs, good low light performance is a must. Most DSLRs can shoot at ISO 1600 and some go to ISO 3200, but performance varies a lot between different cameras.

← Image stabilisation

Also known as anti-shake or vibration reduction, this is either built into the lenses (Nikon, Canon, Panasonic) or into the camera itself (sensor-based, eg. Sony, Pentax, Samsung). Though it's considered that lens-based stabilisation is slightly better, it ties you into buying pricier lenses to get the benefit; sensor-based stabilisation works with any lens.

Burst mode/frame rate →

Particularly important for action and wildlife photographers is the ability to fire off a number of images in quick succession. Even the most basic DSLRs now boast a frame rate of 2.5fps but some are much faster. A good buffer memory is important; it's where images are stored before they're saved. The larger this is, the more images you can shoot before it fills and the camera grinds to a (temporary) halt. Raw files, being bigger, fill the buffer quicker than JPEGs.

← Anti-dust

Every time you change the lens on your DSLR, tiny dust particles can enter the exposed lens mount and land on your sensor, appearing as annoying marks on your pictures. Dust is also created by wear and tear of the moving parts inside the camera. Most manufacturers have a dust removal system that cleans the sensor in one way or another except Nikon, who argue that it isn't a big issue.

Customisation →

One of the benefits of SLRs is the degree of customisation they allow. Choose which dials control which features, or decide whether you want to shoot JPEG, Raw or both at the same time. Do you want the file numbers to start again when you reload a card or carry on where they left off? Control how your picture looks too in your choice of colour space, in-camera sharpening and other parameters.

What Digital Camera

Need to Know

These factors are equally important in your choice of digital SLR

Digital SLR cameras offer numerous advantages over compacts. Their direct optical viewing system lets you see the image as the lens sees it, their interchangeable lenses and extensive range of accessories let you customise it to suit any type of subject, their larger sensors provide better quality images with lower noise levels, and their processing power enables super-fast focusing and shooting at multiple frames per second. Choosing which one to buy though is less straightforward. Here are some key considerations to make.

CAMERA SIZE

Digital SLRs vary greatly in size and weight. On paper you might think that the smaller the better. Your chiropractor would certainly say so. But some people, especially those with big hands or long fingers, find small cameras difficult to hold and the controls too fiddly to access. In fact, many small camera owners add a battery grip afterwards to make it bigger. On the other hand, small cameras are more likely to be taken along on trips than big, heavy ones. Decide whether you're a small camera or big camera person before buying.

SENSOR TYPE

Many people use the term CCD to describe their camera's sensor but in fact the CCD is just one of several types of sensor technology in common use. Canon uses CMOS sensors, Panasonic has LiveMOS, Fuji uses its own SuperCCD and Sigma uses Foveon chips. All have pros and cons, but all are capable of producing great results, so don't base your choice of camera on this factor alone.

PIXELS SCHMIXELS

As with compacts, don't obsess about the number of pixels a DSLR camera has. The more pixels are squeezed into a given space, the smaller they have to be, and this causes problems such as noise. Our tests show that 6 million pixel SLRs can produce A3 prints as good as those from some 10MP models. Quality is dependent on a whole range of factors, of which the number of pixels is just one.

SYSTEMS & LENSES

Each manufacturer uses a different mount for attaching lenses. They are Canon EF, Nikon F, Pentax K (also used by Samsung), Sigma and Four-Thirds (used by Olympus, Panasonic and Leica), Sony Alpha (formerly Minolta) – none of which are compatible with one another. Although no one mount is better than any other, once you pick one you're locked into the system unless you sell your entire kit. So choose your camera well. If you already have a 35mm SLR system it may be tempting to stick with the same brand, especially if you own several lenses. While this may be the cheapest option, new lens technology means you may get better results from the new generation of digital lenses. Your decision should be based on how discerning you are about image quality, versus the depths of your pockets.

BUILD QUALITY

The main difference between expensive professional SLRs and entry-level enthusiast ones is the build quality. Pro cameras are built to withstand knocks, scrapes and inclement weather, which makes them bigger, heavier and costlier. If you don't need this level of engineering put the extra money towards more or better lenses instead.

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			SENSOR	LENS MOUNT	EXP MODES	FILE FORMAT	ISO	FLASH	VIEWFINDER	SCREEN	MEMORY	SIZE / WEIGHT	PROS & CONS	SUMMARY	SCORE	TESTED
	Pentax K100D	£300 £550 rrp Kit	6.1 Mega Pixels CCD 23.5 x 15.7mm	P	PASM Auto 14 Sc	Raw JPEG	200 - 3200	GN 15.6 ISO 200	Pentamirror 95% Coverage	2.5in LCD 210k pixels	SD	130 x 93 x 70mm 560g	**PROS** Good AF, build, noise control, stabilisation **CONS** Tends to underexpose, ugly menu	A solid camera that builds on the legacy of the Pentax *ist D and its derivatives by adding CCD-based image stabilisation. Can produce the goods if handled with care	83%	TESTED NOV 2006
	Nikon D40	£350 £500 rrp Kit	6.1 Mega Pixels CCD 23.7 x 15.6mm	N	PASM Auto 8 Sc	Raw JPEG Raw+	200 - 3200	GN 12 ISO 100	Reflex 95% Coverage	2.5in LCD 230k pixels	SD / SD HC	126 x 64 x 94mm 475g	**PROS** Excellent noise control and image quality **CONS** Basic AF system	Delivers point-and-shoot simplicity with advanced manual settings to grow into. May lack the resolution of some other models, but images are sharp and noise free, so they enlarge well	87% What Digital Camera RECOMMENDED	TESTED JAN 2007
	Pentax K110D	£350 £550 rrp Kit	6.1 Mega Pixels CCD 23.5 x 15.7mm	P	PASM Auto 14 Sc	RAW JPEG	200-3200	GN 15.6 ISO 200	Pentamirror 95% Coverage	2.5in LCD 210k pixels	SD	130 x 93 x 70mm 485mm		Essentially the same camera as the Pentax K100D, with the only thing separating them being the CCD-based anti-shake – the K100D has it, the K110D doesn't		NOT YET TESTED
	Samsung GX-1L	£400 £550 rrp Kit	6 Mega Pixels CCD 23.5 x 15.7mm	P	PASM Auto 6 Sc	Raw JPEG	200 - 3200	GN 15.6 ISO 200	Pentamirror 95% Coverage	2.5in LCD 210k pixels	SD	125 x 93 x 67mm 470g	**PROS** Good image quality, ease of use, speed **CONS** Slight fringing, depth of field preview	The GX-1L is getting a bit long in the tooth now, but for the DSLR buyer on the most frugal of budgets it's easy to use, compact, and capable of producing some good results	88% What Digital Camera RECOMMENDED	TESTED MAY 2006
	Samsung GX-1S	£400 £750 rrp Kit	6.1 Mega Pixels CCD 23.5x 15.7mm	P	PASM Auto 11 Sc	Raw JPEG	200 - 3200	GN 15.6 ISO 200	Pentaprism 95% Coverage	2.5in LCD 210k pixels	SD	125 x 93 x 67mm 505g	**PROS** Excellent range of options, compact **CONS** Some exposure / focusing issues	A good all-round shooter with a high ISO 3200 sensitivity. Starting to look a little dated and a lack of 'unique' features mean it's unlikely to make waves in the DSLR market	85% What Digital Camera RECOMMENDED	TESTED JUNE 2006
	Nikon D40X	£450 £599 rrp Kit	10 Mega Pixels CCD 23.6 x 15.8mm	N	PASM Auto 8 Sc	Raw JPEG Raw+	100-3200	GN 12 ISO 100	Pentamirror 95% Coverage	2.5in LCD 230k pixels	SD	126 x 64 x 94mm 495g	**PROS** On screen 'help', features, tone rate **CONS** Soft images, slower flash sync speed than D40	Essentially a 10MP D40 that produces slightly softer images that go unnoticed up to A3 print sizes. Trying to fill a gap between the D40 and D80, but is there a gap there?	87% What Digital Camera RECOMMENDED	TESTED MAY 2007
	Canon EOS 400D	£480 £650 rrp Kit	10 Mega Pixels CMOS 22.2 x 14.8mm	C	PASM Auto 9 Sc	Raw JPEG Raw+	100 - 1600	GN 13 ISO 100	Pentamirror 95% Coverage	2.5in LCD 230k pixels	CF	127 x 94 x 65mm 545g	**PROS** Compact, build quality, dust reduction **CONS** Chroma noise, position of DOF preview button	Good-value upgrade that offers plenty of improvements on the world's best-selling DSLR – the EOS 350D. Enhancements include a more sophisticated AF system and CCD-based dust reduction	89% What Digital Camera RECOMMENDED	TESTED DEC 2006
	Olympus E-410	£490 £550 rrp Kit	10 Mega Pixels MOS 17.3x 13mm	F	PASM Auto 20 Sc	Raw JPEG Raw+	100-1600	GN 12 ISO 100	Reflex 95% Coverage	2.5in LCD 230k pixels	CF xD	129.5 x 91 x 53mm 375g	**PROS** Excellent noise control, small and light, live-view mode **CONS** Highlights blow easily, limited burst depth	Fantastic upgrade from the E-400. Improvements to the sensor, outstanding noise reduction and the addition of live-view make it a great all-round package at a fantastic price	89% What Digital Camera RECOMMENDED	TESTED AUG 2007
	Pentax K10D	£490 £750 rrp Kit	10 Mega Pixels CCD 23.5x 15.7mm	P	PASM Auto Sv TAv	Raw JPEG	100 - 1600	GN 11 ISO 100	Pentaprism 95% Coverage	2.5in LCD 210k pixels	SD/ SD HC	142 x 101 x 70mm 710g	**PROS** Great spec, great build, great price **CONS** Occasional WB / exposure issues	Essentially the same camera as Samsung's GX10, so the same sentiments apply. You get 12 months less on the guarantee with the Pentax model, though	90% What Digital Camera GOLD AWARD	TESTED MAR 2007
	Sony Alpha 100	£500 £600 rrp Kit	10 Mega Pixels CCD 23.6 x 15.8mm	A	PASM Auto 6 Sc	Raw JPEG Raw+	100 - 1600	GN 12 ISO 100	Pentamirror 95% Coverage	2.5in LCD 230k pixels	CF	133 x 71 x 95mm 545g	**PROS** Image stabilisation, good images, image noise control **CONS** Shutter noise, slight oversaturisation	Some excellent features recommend Sony's first SLR effort, not least a 10MP sensor and anti-shake technology inherited from Konica Minolta's Dynax 5D	87% What Digital Camera RECOMMENDED	TESTED AUG 2006
	Samsung GX10	£540 £650 rrp Kit	10 Mega Pixels CCD 23.5x 15.7mm	P	PASM Auto Sv TAv 6 Sc	Raw JPEG	100 - 1600	GN 11 ISO 100	Pentaprism 95% Coverage	2.5in LCD 210k pixels	SD/ SD HC	142 x 101 x 73mm 710g	**PROS** Great spec, great build, great price **CONS** Occasional WB /exposure issues	The high-end spec and build quality has never before been seen at this price and if you're happy to shoot Raw and work on your images it will deliver superb results. The two-year warranty is a bonus too	90% What Digital Camera GOLD AWARD	TESTED MAR 2007
	Olympus E-330	£550 £900 rrp Kit	7.5 Mega Pixels CMOS 17.3x 13mm	F	PASM 20Sc	Raw JPEG TIFF	100 - 1600	GN 13 ISO 100	Pentamirror 95% Coverage	2.5in LCD 215k pixels	CF xD	140 x 87 x 72mm 550g	**PROS** Live viewing, overall handling, anti-dust **CONS** Image noise over ISO 400, no PC socket	The pull-out live-view LCD is the first of its kind and impressive, while the 7.5MP sensor is a marked improvement over the 8MP sensor used in the earlier E-300. Unconventional looks don't appeal to everyone though	86% What Digital Camera RECOMMENDED	TESTED APR 2006
	Olympus E-510	£600 £600rrp Kit	10 Mega Pixels CCD 17.3 x 13mm	F	PASM Auto 18 Sc	Raw JPEG Raw+	100-1600	GN 12 ISO 100	Reflex 95% Coverage	2.5in LCD 230k pixels	CF xD	136 x 91.5 x 56mm 460g	**PROS** Excellent noise control, dual mode image stabilisation **CONS** Limited dynamic range, SHQ JPEG burst depth rate	A high-resolution 10MP sensor that delivers largely noise-free images, and all the secondary features you're ever likely to need or use; the E-510 is currently the definitive Four Thirds DSLR.	90% What Digital Camera GOLD AWARD	TESTED SEP 2007
	Canon EOS 30D	£600 £1200 rrp Body Only	8 Mega Pixels CMOS 22.5x 15mm	C	PASM Auto 6 Sc	Raw JPEG Raw+	100 - 3200	GN 13 ISO 100	Pentaprism 95% Coverage	2.5in LCD 230k pixels	CF	144 x 106 x 74mm 700g	**PROS** Specs, build, low image noise, better LCD **CONS** Images a little flat, handling, DOF placement	Good solid camera that replaces the popular EOS 20D. The upgrades are evolutionary, rather than revolutionary, but it still shouldn't disappoint the more experienced Canon user	87% What Digital Camera RECOMMENDED	TESTED MAY 2006
	Nikon D80	£670 £900 rrp Kit	10 Mega Pixels CCD 23.6 x 15.8mm	N	PASM Auto 6 Sc	Raw JPEG Raw+	100 - 1600	GN 13 ISO 100	Pentaprism 95% Coverage	2.5in LCD 230k pixels	SD	132 x 103 x 77mm 585g	**PROS** Handling, controls, excellent image quality **CONS** Need a fast PC to quickly open image files	A worthy successor to the D70 which takes much of its technology – and image quality – from the D200, but puts it in a lower-cost body. WDC's Best Product of the Year 2006	91% What Digital Camera GOLD AWARD	TESTED OCT 2006

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			SENSOR	LENS MOUNT	EXP MODES	FILE FORMAT	ISO	FLASH	VIEWFINDER	SCREEN	MEMORY	SIZE / WEIGHT	PROS & CONS	SUMMARY	SCORE	
	Sigma SD14	£770 £1099 rrp Body Only	14 Mega Pixels Foveon CCD 20.7 x 13.8mm	S	PASM	Raw JPEG	100 - 1600	GN 11 ISO 100	Pentaprism 95% Coverage	2.5in LCD 150k pixels	CF	144 x 107 x 81mm 700g	**PROS** Build quality, design, dust protector **CONS** Weak AF, inconsistent white balance, poor LCD	A sound metering system but unpredictable white balance, AF inaccuracies, a poor LCD screen and overly soft images combine to make this one of the worst DSLR's we've tested yet	79%	TESTED JUN 2007
	Nikon D200	£840 £1300 rrp Body Only	10 Mega Pixels CCD 23.6 x 15.8mm	N	PASM	Raw JPEG	100 - 1600	GN 12 ISO 100	Pentaprism 95% Coverage	2.5in LCD 230k pixels	CF	147 x 113 x 74mm 830g	**PROS** Design, speed, handling **CONS** LCD brightness, JPEGS often need processing	Very capable all-rounder targeting the enthusiast / professional market. Offers lots of potential, but is geared to Raw rather than JPEG capture. Winner of the 2006 WDC awards "£1000+ DSLR" category	90% What Digital Camera GOLD AWARD	TESTED FEB 2006
	Fujifilm S5 Pro	£980 £1500 rrp Body Only	12 Mega Pixels CCD 23 x 15.5mm	N	PASM	Raw JPEG Raw+	100 - 3200	GN 12 ISO 100	Pentaprism 95% Coverage	2.5in LCD 230k pixels	CF	147 x 113 x 74mm 830g	**PROS** Extended dinamic range, minimal noise, solid build **CONS** Limited buffer, slightly soft JPEGs	Fuji's S5 Pro incorporates the company's proprietary Super CCD SR Pro sensor to expand the dynamic range. A new processor and two-stage noise reduction work well to keep images clean across the ISO range	88% What Digital Camera RECOMMENDED	TESTED APR 2007
	Panasonic L1	£1150 £1500 rrp Kit	7.5 Mega Pixels MOS 17.3 x 13mm	F	PASM	Raw JPEG	100 - 1600	GN 10 ISO 100	Panomirror 95% Coverage	2.5in LCD 207k pixels	SD / SD HC	146 x 87 x 80mm 530g	**PROS** Fun handling, especially for traditionalists **CONS** Still limited system at the moment	One of the most 'traditional' handling experiences to be offered by a DSLR which includes the use of a lens-based aperture ring. Worth considering, particularly if you're new to automated cameras	85% What Digital Camera RECOMMENDED	TESTED OCT 2006
	Canon EOS 5D	£1550 £2500 rrp Body Only	12.8 Mega Pixels CMOS 35.8 x 23.9mm	C	PASM Auto	Raw JPEG Raw+	100 - 1600	No	Pentaprism 96% Coverage	2.5in LCD 230k pixels	CF	152 x 113 x 75mm 810g	**PROS** Well built, good features, speed of use, images **CONS** Some fiddly controls, faint fringing	From pros to enthusiasts the EOS 5D's full-frame sensor lets you get the most from your wideangle lenses. There are mixed reports of quite severe vignetting though – some cameras seem to do it, others don't	91% What Digital Camera GOLD AWARD	TESTED DEC 2005
	Leica Digilux 3	£1750 £1790 rrp	7.5 Mega Pixels MOS 17.3 x 13mm	F	PASM	Raw JPEG	100 - 1600	GN 10 ISO 100	Panomirror 95% Coverage	2.5in LCD 207k pixels	SD/ SD HC	146 x 87 x 80mm 530g		A result of the Panasonic / Leica partnership, the Digilux 3 is essentially the Panasonic L1 in Leica clothing. It costs more than the L1, but the resale value should be higher too		NOT YET TESTED
	Nikon D2HS	£2000 £2500 rrp Body Only	4 Mega Pixels CCD 23.3 x 15.5mm	N	PASM	Raw JPEG TIFF	200 - 1600	No	Pentaprism 100% Coverage	2.5in LCD 232k pixels	CF	158 x 150 x 86mm 1,070g	**PROS** Handling, image quality, system support, speed **CONS** 4MP may not be enough	The D2HS has a very singular purpose – to be fast enough for the most demanding sports photographer, and rugged enough to stand the test of time. The 4MP CCD limits its general usability though	90% What Digital Camera GOLD AWARD	TESTED OCT 2005
	Nikon D2XS	£2480 £3500 rrp Body Only	12 Mega Pixels CMOS 23.5 x 19.1mm	N	PASM	Raw JPEG	100 - 3200	No	Pentaprism 100% Coverage	2.5in LCD 230k pixels	CF	158 x 150 x 86mm 1,070g	**PROS** Build, image quality **CONS** Single card slot, buffer memory could be faster	A fine example of optical and digital technology combined. A choice of high-speed, 6MP capture or high-resolution 12MP capture means it offers something for everyone – from the studio to the sports stadium	95% What Digital Camera GOLD AWARD	TESTED NOV 2006
	Canon EOS-1D MKII N	£2700 £3050 rrp Body Only	8.2 Mega Pixels CMOS 28.7 x 19.1mm	C	PASM	Raw JPEG Raw+	100 - 3200	No	Pentaprism 100% Coverage	2.5in LCD 230k pixels	CF SD	156 x 158 x 80mm 1,225g	**PROS** Build, image quality, fast, good buffer rate **CONS** Expensive compared to competition	The EOS 1D MkII N is a good camera, but not really a significant upgrade option if you've got the original EOS 1D. However, if you want a fast EOS with a decent resolution, look no further	91% What Digital Camera GOLD AWARD	TESTED MAR 2006
	Canon EOS-1D MK III	£3000 £3049 rrp Body Only	10.1 Mega Pixels CMOS 28.1 x 18.7mm	C	PASM	Raw JPEG Raw+	50 – 6400	No	Pentaprism 100% Coverage	3in LCD 230k pixels	CF SD	156 x 157 x 80mm 1,155g		The EOS 1D MkIII is a revolutionary upgrade of the MkII, boasting a 10fps drive rate for 110 JPEG frames, a 3in LCD with a genuinely useable 'live view' mode and an ISO range increase in both directions – looks great		NOT YET TESTED
	Canon EOS-1Ds MK II	£4470 £6000 rrp Body Only	16.7 Mega Pixels CMOS 36 x 24mm	C	PASM	Raw JPEG Raw+	100 - 1600	No	Pentaprism 100% Coverage	2.0in LCD 230k pixels	CF SD	156 x 158 x 80 1,215g	**PROS** Superb image quality, camera body design **CONS** None really, but larger LCD would be nice	Quite simply, as good as it gets. The full-frame sensor and high resolution complement each other perfectly and the image quality is superb. Canon has another scorcher	96% What Digital Camera GOLD AWARD	TESTED APR 2005

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There are nearly 300 lenses out there but which to choose? Start here!

What Lens

Your DSLR probably came with a lens in the 18-55mm or 18-70mm range (or 14-45mm if you bought an Olympus). In 35mm terms all these lenses start at the equivalent of around 25-28mm wideangle and reach their maximum zoom at between 75mm and 100mm.

Depending on what subjects you like to shoot, you may want to expand your options with a wideangle or telephoto, or upgrade to better-quality lenses. There's a huge number to choose from and so far we've only tested a few of them, but we'll be testing a handful every month from now on, so keep reading WDC for updates.

BUYING ADVICE: CHOOSING A LENS

Digital versus Analogue lenses

If you've got lenses from your old 35mm SLR you may be tempted to keep them for your DSLR, rather than buy new digital lenses. In fact there are several advantages to upgrading to new optics. The first is that because digital sensors are smaller, the circular image the lens produces can be reduced in diameter, so the lenses themselves can be smaller and lighter. Secondly, with some older lenses, the light exiting the rear optic strikes the sensor at an acute angle which, because sensors are 'bumpy' not smooth, causes optical problems such as fringing. Digital lenses are designed so that light strikes the sensor as straight on as possible, which can make a big difference to the image quality.

KEY: THE LISTINGS EXPLAINED

SIGMA	70mm	£325	f/2.8	EX DG	AONPS	76x95mm/525g	No	62mm	Macro	84%	June 06
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	

1 FOCAL RANGE
The focal length or focal length range covered by the lens

2 PRICE
Manufacturer's RRP

3 MAX APERTURE
Maximum aperture

4 DESIGNATION
APO, VR etc (see Jargon Buster)

5 LENS MOUNTS
A= Sony Alpha
C= Canon
F= Four-Thirds
N= Nikon
P= Pentax
S= Sigma

6 SIZE & WEIGHT
Length&Diameter / Weight

7 DIGITAL ONLY
'No' means it can also be used with 35mm/ full-frame sensors

8 THREAD
Filter size

9 COMMENTS
Further information

10 SCORES
Score out of 100%
Recommended
Gold Award
WDC issue test date

BUYING A LENS: JARGON BUSTER

Aperture: The adjustable bladed opening in the lens which lets the light through. The smaller it is, the less light gets to the sensor.
APO: Apochromatic – lens elements designed to produce sharper images by focusing all wavelengths of light to the same point.
Barrel distortion: When straight lines in an image bow outwards.
ED: Extra low dispersion glass – produces higher contrast/less flare.
Flare: Bright streaks/polygons on images caused by non-image forming light causing internal reflections. Use of a lens hood reduces this.
Fringing: Purple lines around the edges of high-contrast edges in pictures. A problem especially affecting cheaper and non-digital optics.
IF: Internal focusing – the lens doesn't get longer as you focus, nor does the front element rotate.
IS: Image Stabilisation – Canon's lens-based anti-shake technology.
Pincushion distortion: When straight lines in a shot bow inwards.
Vignetting: A darkening in the corners of the image.
VR: Vibration Reduction – Nikon's lens-based anti-shake technology.

Types of lens

Most lenses fall into one of these categories

Fixed focal length

Fixed lenses offer some advantages over zooms. They're generally smaller and lighter, with wider maximum apertures and superior image quality. An ultra-fast (eg f/1.8) 50mm lens is perfect for low light, 85-105mm is ideal for portraits while a fast 300mm (or longer) tele is a popular addition to any wildlife or sports shooter's kit.

Standard zoom

Most DSLRs come with a standard zoom; that is, one which spans from moderate wideangle to short telephoto. These 'kit' lenses are generally fine for most purposes but there are alternatives that offer superior image quality and/or wider maximum apertures – at a price premium, of course.

Wideangle zoom

Wideangles make subjects seem further away, enabling you to get more in the shot. Among the most popular wideangle zooms are the 10-20mm/12-24mm and 17-35mm ranges. Superwide lenses cause more distortion, especially when tilted off the perpendicular but, with care, can be used to create a great sense of drama.

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We choose the best of the best lenses

This Month's Picks

CANON 85mm f/1.2

Why we love this lens...
It's a beast of a lens with a price tag to match but super-sharp images, gorgeous colour, nice blur and wide maximum aperture make it ideal for portraiture and worth every penny of its £1450 asking price.

TAMRON 90mm f/2.8

Why we love this lens...
This full-frame portrait macro lens boasts minor chromatic abberation, fantastic sharpness and a 'true' 1:1 macro magnification, representing fantastic value for its £299 tag.

NIKON 17-55mm

Why we love this lens...
A constant aperture of f/2.8 and a high-quality build match with Nikon's Silent Wave Motor to pruduce a great wide-zoom lens.

What Digital Camera Need to Know

LENS MOUNTS
Each camera manufacturer has their own lens mount and they aren't compatible with one another. If you own a Canon, for example, you can't use Nikon lenses, though you can use independent brands such as Sigma and Tamron – if you get them in the right mount.

MAGNIFICATION FACTOR
If you're migrating from a 35mm SLR, your lenses won't provide the same field of view on a DSLR unless you have a 'full-frame' model such as Canon's EOS 5D. For Nikon, Pentax, Fuji and Sony DSLRs magnify the focal length by 1.5x to get the 35mm equivalent (eg a 100mm lens becomes 150mm); for Canon it's 1.6x; Sigma is 1.7x; and the Four-Thirds mount, 2.0x.

MAXIMUM APERTURE
You pay a premium for lenses with wider maximum apertures but for many users they're worth it. Wider apertures mean you can use faster, motion-stopping shutter speeds, and shoot handheld in available light with less camera shake. Zooms whose maximum apertures are fixed throughout the range (instead of getting smaller as you zoom) also cost more.

35MM COMPATIBILITY
Most digital sensors are smaller than 35mm, which is why lenses designed for digital can be smaller than those designed for 35mm. Although pre-digital lenses can be used on digital SLRs they may not perform as well, due to their optical characteristics. Lenses designed solely for digital sensors, however, can't be used on 35mm cameras (or digital SLRs with 35mm-sized sensors) because the image they produce isn't big enough in diameter to cover the sensor/film, causing severe vignetting.

ANTI-SHAKE
It's impossible to hold a camera dead steady without support, but at the faster shutter speeds our shakiness isn't noticeable in pictures. As the shutter speed drops though, our pictures become progressively less 'crisp' until they're downright blurry. Optical Image Stabilisation (used by Canon) and Vibration Reduction (Nikon) uses a floating element inside the lens and a gyroscope to cancel out our body movement. It's effective enough to give us two or three extra stops of extra shutter speeds to play with before shake becomes visible. Some cameras (eg Sony, Pentax and Samsung) use a moving sensor instead, so IS/VR lenses aren't necessary.

BUILT-IN FOCUS MOTOR
Some lenses incorporate a motor within the lens to drive the auto focusing, while others are powered by motors within the camera. Lenses with their own motors will generally focus more quickly than those without. Some cameras, such as the Nikon D40, don't have a built-in focus motor so in these cases you can only use lenses that have their own. Canon brands its lens motors USM (Ultrasonic Motor), Sigma calls its HSM (Hypersonic Motor) and Nikon's are called Sonic Wave.

Telephoto zoom
Telephotos make subjects appear closer. They're great for sport and wildlife where you can't get close, while short teles are good for portraits. Telephotos magnify camera shake, so consider one with Image Stabilisation if your camera doesn't have it, or a wide maximum aperture.

Superzooms
Want a one-lens solution for your photography? Get a superzoom. While they rarely compare with shorter range lenses in image quality, a 18-200mm type lens offers the benefit of speed, convenience and a dust-free sensor. Good for general shooting at moderate print sizes.

Macro lenses ↓
Many lenses misleadingly sport the 'macro' moniker but a true dedicated macro lens lets you get close enough to reproduce your subject at life-size (or half life-size) on the sensor. Macro lenses (few of which zoom) come in a range of focal lengths from standard to telephoto.

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			Min aperture	Designation	K-mount	Size & weight	Digital only	Filter thread	Comment	Scores	
CANON	10-22mm	£475	f/3.5-4.5	USM	C	84x90mm/385g	Yes	77mm	Ultrasonic motor	80%	Mar 07
CANON	14mm	£1499	f/2.8	L USM	C	77x89mm/560g	No	n/a	Pro-spec L lens		
CANON	15mm	£529	f/2.8	FE	C	73x63mm/330g	No	n/a	Fisheye		
CANON	16-35mm	£1199	f/2.8	L USM	C	84x103mm/600g	No	77mm	Pro-spec L lens		
CANON	17-40mm	£549	f/4	L USM	C	84x97mm/400g	No	77mm	High-quality wide-zoom	89% ○	May 07
CANON	17-55mm	£779	f/2.8	IS USM	C	84x111mm/645g	Yes	77mm	Image stabilisation		
CANON	17-85mm	£429	f/4-5.6	IS USM	C	79x92mm/475g	Yes	67mm	Image stabilisation		
CANON	18-55mm	£150	f/3.5-5.6	II	C	69x66mm/190g	Yes	58mm	Standard EF-S kit lens	77%	Apr 07
CANON	20mm	£335	f/2.8	USM	C	78x71mm/405g	No	72mm	Ultrasonic motor		
CANON	20-35mm	£279	f/3.5-4.5	USM	C	84x89mm/340g	No	77mm	Nice wide zoom	89% ○	June 05
CANON	24mm	£1045	f/1.4	L USM	C	84x78mm/550g	No	77mm	Pro-spec L lens		
CANON	24mm	£315	f/2.8	-	C	68x49mm/270g	No	58mm	Small and lightweight		
CANON	24-70mm	£879	f/2.8	L USM	C	84x124mm/950g	No	77mm	Pro-spec L lens		
CANON	24-85mm	£255	f/3.5-4.5	USM	C	73x70mm/380g	No	67mm	Ultrasonic motor		
CANON	24-105mm	£768	f/4	L IS USM	C	84x107mm/670g	No	77mm	Image stabilisation		
CANON	28mm	£139	f/2.8	-	C	67x43mm/185g	No	52mm	Budget lightweight lens		
CANON	28mm	£329	f/1.8	USM	C	74x56mm/310g	No	58mm	Ultrasonic motor		
CANON	28-80mm	£50	f/3.5-5.6	II	C	67x71mm/220g	No	58mm	Micro motor		
CANON	28-90mm	£95	f/4-5.6	III	C	67x71mm/190g	No	58mm	Lightweight zoom		
CANON	28-105mm	£115	f/4-5.6	-	C	67x68mm/220g	No	58mm	Micro USM II motor		
CANON	28-105mm	£150	f/4-5.6	USM	C	67x68mm/220g	No	58mm	Ultrasonic motor		
CANON	28-105mm	£199	f/3.5-4.5	II USM	C	72x75mm/375g	No	58mm	Ultrasonic motor		
CANON	28-135mm	£369	f/3.5-5.6	IS USM	C	78x97mm/540g	No	58mm	Superb all-rounder	90% ○	June 05
CANON	28-200mm	£279	f/3.5-5.6	USM	C	78x90mm/500g	No	58mm	Ultrasonic motor		
CANON	28-300mm	£1799	f/3.5-5.6	L IS USM	C	92x184mm/1670g	No	77mm	Image stabilisation		
CANON	35mm	£839	f/1.4	L USM	C	79x86mm/580g	No	72mm	Pro-spec L lens		
CANON	35mm	£189	f/2	-	C	68x43mm/210g	No	52mm	Fast standard lens		
CANON	50mm	£1099	f/1.2	L USM	C	86x66mm/580g	No	72mm	Pro-spec L lens		
CANON	50mm	£269	f/1.4	USM	C	74x51mm/290g	No	58mm	Ultrasonic motor		
CANON	50mm	£89	f/1.8	II	C	68x41mm/130g	No	52mm	Lightest EF lens in range		
CANON	50mm	£225	f/2.5	EF	C	69x63mm/280g	No	52mm	Macro (1/2 life size)		
CANON	60mm	£300	f/2.8	EF-S USM	C	73x70mm/335g	Yes	52mm	Great 'true' macro lens	88% ○	Aug 06
CANON	55-200mm	£189	f/4.5-5.6	II USM	C	70x97mm/310g	No	52mm	Ultrasonic motor		
CANON	70-200mm	£1249	f/2.8	L IS USM	C	86x197mm/1570g	No	77mm	Image stabilisation		
CANON	70-200mm	£549	f/4	L USM	C	76x172mm/310g	No	67mm	Pro-spec L lens		
CANON	70-300mm	£959	f/4.5-5.6	DO IS USM	C	82x100mm/720g	No	58mm	Image stabilisation		
CANON	75-300mm	£139	f/4-5.6	III	C	71x122mm/480g	No	58mm	Useful zoom range		
CANON	75-300mm	£149	f/4-5.6	III USM	C	71x122mm/480g	No	58mm	Average performance	77%	Sept 07
CANON	85mm	£1459	f/1.2	L II USM	C	92x84mm/1025g	No	72mm	Excellent portrait lens	88% ○	Aug 06
CANON	85mm	£279	f/1.8	USM	C	75x72mm/425g	No	72mm	Ultrasonic motor		
CANON	90-300mm	£125	f/4.5-5.6	-	C	71x115mm/420g	No	58mm	Lightweight zoom		
CANON	90-300mm	£209	f/4.5-5.6	USM	C	71x115mm/420g	No	58mm	Ultrasonic motor		
CANON	100mm	£309	f/2	USM	C	75x74mm/460g	No	58mm	Ultrasonic motor		
CANON	100mm	£470	f/2.8	USM	C	79x119mm/600g	No	58mm	1:1 Macro (life size)	87% ○	Aug 06
CANON	100-300mm	£259	f/4.5-5.6	USM	C	73x122mm/540g	No	58mm	Ultrasonic motor		
CANON	100-400mm	£1099	f/4.5-5.6	L IS USM	C	92x189mm/1380g	No	77mm	Pro-spec L lens		
CANON	135mm	£289	f/2.8	SF	C	69x98mm/390g	No	52mm	Soft-focus		
CANON	180mm	£1100	f/3.5	L USM	C	83x187mm/1090g	No	72mm	Tele macro		
CANON	200mm	£559	f/2.8	L II USM	C	88x136mm/765g	No	72mm	Pro-spec L lens		
CANON	300mm	£2999	f/2.8	L IS USM	C	128x252mm/2550g	No	Drop-in	Pro-spec L lens		
CANON	300mm	£979	f/4	L IS USM	C	90x221mm/1190g	No	77mm	Pro-spec L lens		
CANON	400mm	£5999	f/2.8	L IS USM	C	163x349mm/5370g	No	Drop-in	Pro-spec L lens		
CANON	400mm	£3899	f/4	DO IS USM	C	128x233mm/1940g	No	Drop-in	Image stabilised		
CANON	400mm	£979	f/5.6	L USM	C	90x265mm/1250g	No	77mm	Pro-spec L lens		
CANON	500mm	£4899	f/4	L IS USM	C	146x387mm/3870g	No	Drop-in	Image stabilised		
CANON	600mm	£5849	f/4	L IS USM	C	168x456mm/5360g	No	Drop-in	Image stabilised		
LEICA	14-50mm	£TBC	f/2.8-3.5	D	F	78x103mm/490g	Yes	72mm	Stabilised 4/3 lens		
LEICA	14-150mm	£TBC	f/3.5-5.6	D ASPH	F	78x90mm/520g	Yes	72mm	Stabilised 4/3 lens		
LEICA	25mm	£TBC	f/1.4	D ASPH	F	78x75mm/525g	Yes	62mm	Fast four-thirds lens		
LEICA	10.5mm	£489	f/2.8	DX ED G	N	63x63mm/305g	Yes	n/a	Fisheye		
LEICA	12-24mm	£769	f/4	DX ED G IF	N	83x90mm/465g	Yes	77mm	ED glass	86% ○	Mar 07
NIKON	14mm	£1199	f/2.8	D ED	N	87x87mm/670g	No	n/a	ED glass		
NIKON	16mm	£549	f/2.8	D	N	63x57mm/290g	No	n/a	Fisheye		
NIKON	17-35mm	£1249	f/2.8	D ED IF	N	89x106mm/745g	No	77mm	ED glass		
NIKON	17-55mm	£999	f/2.8	DX ED G IF	N	86x111mm/755g	Yes	77mm	ED glass	86% ○	May 07
NIKON	18mm	£1199	f/2.8	D	N	82x58mm/380g	No	77mm	Ultra-wide fast lens		
NIKON	18-35mm	£369	f/3.5-4.5	D ED IF	N	83x83mm/370g	No	77mm	ED glass		
NIKON	18-55mm	£149	f/3.5-5.6	DX ED G	N	69x74mm/210g	Yes	52mm	ED glass	82%	Apr 07

			Min aperture	Designation	K-mount	Size & weight	Digital only	Filter thread	Comment	Scores	
NIKON	18-70mm	£219	f/3.5-4.5	DX ED G IF	N	73x76mm/390g	Yes	67mm	Good standard zoom	87% ○	June 05
NIKON	18-135mm	£279	f/3.5-5.6	DX ED G IF	N	74x87mm/385g	Yes	67mm	Good value zoom lens	87% ○	June 07
NIKON	18-200mm	£519	f/3.5-5.6	DX ED G IF VR	N	77x97mm/560g	Yes	72mm	Great superzoom	88% ○	June 06
NIKON	20mm	£369	f/2.8	D	N	69x43mm/270g	No	62mm	Close-range correction		
NIKON	24mm	£329	f/2.8	D	N	65x46mm/270g	No	52mm	Close-range correction		
NIKON	24-50mm	£375	f/3.3-4.5	D	N	68x74mm/355g	No	62mm	Lightweight zoom		
NIKON	24-85mm	£449	f/2.8-4	D IF	N	79x82mm/545g	No	72mm	Above average zoom	84%	June 05
NIKON	24-120mm	£479	f/3.5-5.6	ED G IF VR	N	77x94mm/575g	No	72mm	Vibration reduction		
NIKON	28mm	£179	f/2.8	D	N	65x45mm/205g	No	52mm	Standard wide lens		
NIKON	28-70mm	£1149	f/2.8	D ED IF	N	89x122mm/935g	No	77mm	ED glass and IF		
NIKON	28-100mm	£139	f/3.5-5.6	G	N	68x80mm/245g	No	62mm	One aspherical element		
NIKON	28-200mm	£199	f/3.5-5.6	DG	N	70x71mm/360g	No	62mm	3 ED elements and IF		
NIKON	35mm	£229	f/2	D	N	65x44mm/205g	No	52mm	Fast lightweight lens		
NIKON	35-70mm	£529	f/2.8	D	N	72x95mm/665g	No	62mm	'Push-pull' type zoom		
NIKON	50mm	£249	f/1.4	D	N	65x43mm/230g	No	52mm	Fast portraiture lens		
NIKON	50mm	£99	f/1.8	D	N	64x49mm/155g	No	52mm	Fast lightweight lens		
NIKON	55-200mm	£179	f/4-5.6	DX ED G	N	68x79mm/255g	Yes	52mm	ED glass		
NIKON	55-200mm	£249	f/4-5.6	DX VR	N	73x99mm/355g	Yes	52mm	Offers plenty for the price	86% ○	July 07
NIKON	60mm	£319	f/2.8	D	N	70x75mm/440g	No	62mm	Cracking macro	92% ○	Aug 06
NIKON	70-200mm	£1299	f/2.8	ED G IF VR	N	87x215mm/1470g	No	77mm	Vibration reduction		
NIKON	70-300mm	£169	f/4-5.6	G	N	74x117mm/425g	No	62mm	Lightweight zoom lens	74%	June 05
NIKON	70-300mm	£399	f/4.5-5.6	ED G VR	N	80x143.5mm/745g	No	67mm	Dual mode VR		
NIKON	80-200mm	£799	f/2.8	D ED	N	87x187mm/1300g	No	77mm	Fast tele zoom	93% ○	June 05
NIKON	80-400mm	£1099	f/4.5-5.6	D ED VR	N	91x171mm/1360g	No	77mm	Vibration reduction		
NIKON	85mm	£82	f/1.4	D IF	N	80x73mm/550g	No	77mm	Internal focusing		
NIKON	85mm	£279	f/1.8	D	N	72x59mm/380g	No	62mm	Rear focusing		
NIKON	105mm	£729	f/2	DC D	N	79x111mm/640g	No	72mm	Rear focusing		
NIKON	105mm	£699	f/2.8	ED G IF VR	N	83x116mm/790g	No	62mm	Macro and VR		
NIKON	135mm	£839	f/2	DC D	N	79x120mm/815g	No	72mm	Rear focusing		
NIKON	180mm	£599	f/2.8	ED IF	N	79x144mm/760g	No	72mm	ED glass		
NIKON	200mm	£2699	f/2	ED G IF VR	N	124x203mm/2900g	No	52mm	Vibration reduction		
NIKON	200mm	£1049	f/4	D ED IF	N	76x193mm/1190g	No	62mm	Macro and IF		
NIKON	200-400mm	£4599	f/4	ED G IF VR	N	124x365mm/3275g	No	52mm	Vibration reduction		
NIKON	300mm	£3299	f/2.8	ED G IF VR	N	124x267mm/2870g	No	52mm	Vibration reduction		
NIKON	300mm	£849	f/4	D ED IF	N	90x225mm/1440g	No	77mm	ED glass		
NIKON	400mm	£6299	f/2.8	D ED IF II	N	160x352mm/4440g	No	52mm	ED glass		
NIKON	500mm	£4999	f/4	D ED IF II	N	140x394mm/3430g	No	52mm	ED glass		
NIKON	600mm	£6799	f/4	D ED IF II	N	166x431mm/4750g	No	52mm	ED glass		
NIKON	20mm	£400	f/2.8	MF	N	65x43mm/260g	No	62mm	Manual focus		
NIKON	24mm	£300	f/2.8	MF	N	63x46mm/275g	No	52mm	Manual focus		
NIKON	28mm	£170	f/2.8	MF	N	63x45mm/250g	No	62mm	Manual focus		
NIKON	35mm	£480	f/1.4	MF	N	68x62mm/400g	No	62mm	Manual focus		
NIKON	50mm	£360	f/1.2	MF	N	69x48mm/360g	No	52mm	Manual focus		
NIKON	50mm	£230	f/1.4	AIS	N	63x40mm/250g	No	52mm	Manual focus		
NIKON	55mm	£220	f/2.8	MF	N	64x62mm/290g	No	52mm	Manual focus macro		
NIKON	85mm	£900	f/2.8	D MF	N	84x110mm/775g	No	77mm	Man. foc./tilt and shift		
OLYMPUS	7-14mm	£1199	f/4	-	F	87x120mm/780g	Yes	n/a	ED, Super ED and aph.		
OLYMPUS	8mm	£529	f/3.5	ED	F	79x77mm/485g	Yes	n/a	Splashproof fisheye		
OLYMPUS	11-22mm	£539	f/2.8-3.5	-	F	75x93mm/485g	Yes	72mm	Two aspherical elements		
OLYMPUS	14-42mm	£179	f/3.5-5.6	ED	F	66x61mm/190g	Yes	58mm	ED glass		
OLYMPUS	14-45mm	£170	f/3.5-5.6	-	F	71x87mm/285g	Yes	58mm	Standard kit lens	79%	Apr 07
OLYMPUS	14-54mm	£449	f/2.8-3.5	-	F	74x88mm/435g	Yes	67mm	Pro-spec zoom	84%	May 07
OLYMPUS	18-180mm	£350	f/3.5-6.3	ED	F	78x85mm/435g	Yes	62mm	Built-in CPU		
OLYMPUS	35mm	£149	f/3.5	-	F	71x53mm/165g	Yes	52mm	Macro		
OLYMPUS	35-100mm	£1650	f/2	-	F	97x214mm/1650g	Yes	77mm	Built-in CPU		
OLYMPUS	40-150mm	£199	f/3.5-4.5	-	F	77x107mm/425g	Yes	58mm	Good performer	84%	Sept 07
OLYMPUS	50mm	£360	f/2	-	F	71x62mm/300g	Yes	52mm	Fast macro lens	86% ○	Aug 06
OLYMPUS	50-200mm	£899	f/2.8-3.5	-	F	87x157mm/1070g	Yes	67mm	Long-reaching zoom	91% ○	June 05
OLYMPUS	90-250mm	£3799	f/2.8-3.5	ED	F	124x276mm/3270g	Yes	105mm	ED glass		
OLYMPUS	150mm	£1999	f/2	ED	F	100x150mm/1190g	Yes	82mm	ED + Super ED glass		
OLYMPUS	300mm	£4899	f/2.8	ED	F	129x281mm/190g	Yes	Drop-in	ED glass		
PENTAX	10-17mm	£389	f/3.5-4.5	DA ED IF	P	68x72mm/370g	Yes	n/a	Fisheye lens with IF		
PENTAX	12-24mm	£679	f/4	DA ED AL IF	P	84x88mm/430g	Yes	77mm	Internal focusing		
PENTAX	14mm	£589	f/2.8	DA ED IF	P	84x69mm/420g	Yes	77mm	ED glass and IF		
PENTAX	16-45mm	£349	f/4	DA ED AL	P	72x62mm/365g	Yes	67mm	ED glass		
PENTAX	16-50mm	£589	f/2.8	DA*	P	84x99mm/565g	Yes	77mm	Weatherproof		
PENTAX	18-55mm	£199	f/3.5-5.6	DA AL	P	69x68mm/225g	Yes	52mm	Good standard zoom	80%	Apr 07
PENTAX	21mm	£449	f/3.2	DA AL	P	63x25mm/140g	Yes	49mm	Limited edition		

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			MIN APERTURE	DESIGNATION	MOUNT	SIZE & WEIGHT	DIGITAL ONLY	FILTER THREAD	COMMENT	SCORES	
PENTAX	31mm	£699	f/1.8	FA AL	P	69x65mm/345g	No	77mm	Limited edition		
PENTAX	40mm	£249	f/2.8	DA	P	63x15mm/90g	Yes	45mm	Limited edition		
PENTAX	43mm	£440	f/1.9	FA	P	64x27mm/155g	No	49mm	Limited edition		
PENTAX	50mm	£399	f/2.8	DFA	P	68x60mm/265g	No	45mm	Macro	87% ○	Aug 06
PENTAX	50-135mm	£650	f/2.8	DA*	P	77x136mm/765g	Yes	67mm	Weatherproof		
PENTAX	50-200mm	£179	f/4-5.6	DAED	P	67x79mm/260g	Yes	52mm	Quick-shift focus system		
PENTAX	70mm	£449	f/2.4	DA	P	63x26mm/130g	Yes	49mm	Limited edition		
PENTAX	77mm	£629	f/1.8	DA	P	64x48mm/270g	Yes	45mm	Limited edition		
PENTAX	100mm	£449	f/2.8	DFA	P	68x81mm/345g	No	49mm	Macro	85% ○	Aug 06
SAMSUNG	10-17mm	£330	f/3.5-4.5	D-XENON	P	68x72mm/320g	Yes	45mm	Fisheye zoom lens		
SAMSUNG	12-24mm	£550	f/4	D-XENON	P	84x88mm/430g	Yes	77mm	Ultra-wide zoom lens		
SAMSUNG	16-45mm	£350	f/4	D-XENON	P	72x92mm/365g	Yes	67mm	Quick-shift focus system		
SAMSUNG	18-55mm	£170	f/3.5-5.6	D-XENON	P	69x68mm/225g	Yes	52mm	Average kit lens	80%	Apr 07
SAMSUNG	35mm	£300	f/2	D-XENON	P	64x45mm/195g	Yes	49mm	Fast wideangle lens		
SAMSUNG	50-200mm	£200	f/4-5.6	D-XENON	P	67x79mm/255g	Yes	52mm	Useful focal range		
SAMSUNG	100mm	£400	f/2.8	D-XENON	P	68x81mm/345g	Yes	49mm	Macro		
SIGMA	8mm	£519	f/3.5	EX DG	ACNPS	74x69mm/400g	No	-	Fisheye		
SIGMA	8mm	£479	f/4	EX DG	ACNPS	74x63mm/320g	No	-	Fisheye		
SIGMA	10-20mm	£319	f/4-5.6	EX DC	ACNPS	84x81mm/465g	Yes	77mm	Pro-spec EX lens	79%	Mar 07
SIGMA	12-24mm	£499	f/4.5-5.6	EX DG	ACNPS	87x103mm/600g	No	-	Cracking wide zoom	90% ○	June 05
SIGMA	14mm	£535	f/2.8	EX DG	ACNPS	82x91mm/630g	No	-	Pro-spec EX lens		
SIGMA	15mm	£389	f/2.8	EX DG	ACNPS	74x65mm/370g	No	-	Fisheye		
SIGMA	15-30mm	£260	f/3.5-4.5	EX DG	ACNPS	87x133mm/600g	No	-	Pro-spec EX lens		
SIGMA	17-35mm	£249	f/2.8-4	EX DG	ACNPS	84x89mm/560g	No	77mm	Pro-spec EX lens		
SIGMA	17-70mm	£259	f/2.8-4.5	DC	ACNPS	83x79mm/455g	Yes	72mm	Macro	88% ○	July 06
SIGMA	18-50mm	£279	f/2.8	EX DC	ACNPS	74x84mm/445g	Yes	67mm	Pro-spec EX lens		
SIGMA	18-50mm	£369	f/2.8	EX DC	ACNPS	79x86mm/450g	Yes	72mm	Macro	88% ○	May 07
SIGMA	18-50mm	£99	f/3.5-5.6	EX DC	ACNPS	68x62mm/250g	Yes	58mm	Standard zoom	81%	June 05
SIGMA	18-125mm	£209	f/3.5-5.6	DC	ACNPS	70x78mm/385g	Yes	62mm	Zoom with IF		
SIGMA	18-200mm	£279	f/3.5-6.3	DC	ACNP	70x78mm/405g	Yes	62mm	Two SLD elements		
SIGMA	18-200mm	£439	f/3.5-6.3	DC OS	ACNPS	79x100mm/610g	Yes	72mm	Optical Stabilisation		
SIGMA	20mm	£269	f/1.8	EX DG	ACNPS	89x90mm/520g	No	82mm	Pro-spec EX lens		
SIGMA	20-40mm	£249	f/2.8	EX DG	ACNP	89x108mm/600g	No	82mm	Pro-spec EX lens		
SIGMA	24mm	£229	f/1.8	EX DG	ACFNPS	84x83mm/485g	No	77mm	Macro		
SIGMA	24-60mm	£289	f/2.8	EX DG	ACNP	84x87mm/550g	No	77mm	Above average zoom	88% ○	June 05
SIGMA	24-70mm	£269	f/2.8	EX DG	ACNPS	89x116mm/715g	No	82mm	Macro		
SIGMA	24-70mm	£99	f/3.5-5.6	EX DG	ACNP	70x76mm/285g	No	62mm	Pro-spec EX lens		
SIGMA	24-135mm	£249	f/2.8-4.5	-	ACNP	84x91mm/530g	No	77mm	Internal focusing		
SIGMA	28mm	£289	f/1.8	EX DG	ACFNPS	84x83mm/500g	No	77mm	Aph, glass and macro		
SIGMA	28-70mm	£239	f/2.8	EX DG	ACNP	74x87mm/510g	No	67mm	Pro-spec EX lens		
SIGMA	28-70mm	£79	f/2.8-4	DG	ACNP	68x63mm/255g	No	58mm	Multi-layer coated lens		
SIGMA	28-105mm	£169	f/2.8-4	DG	ACNP	77x80mm/405g	No	72mm	Useful range		
SIGMA	28-105mm	£99	f/3.8-5.6	-	ACNP	71x73mm/275g	No	62mm	Useful zoom range		
SIGMA	28-135mm	£109	f/3.8-5.6	-	ACFNPS	75x75mm/410g	No	62mm	IF and asph. element		
SIGMA	28-200mm	£179	f/3.5-5.6	DG	ACNP	70x78mm/400g	No	62mm	Macro		
SIGMA	28-300mm	£219	f/3.5-6.3	DG	ACNP	74x86mm/490g	No	62mm	Macro		
SIGMA	30mm	£299	f/1.4	EX DC HSM	ACFNPS	77x59mm/400g	Yes	62mm	Hypersonic motor		
SIGMA	50mm	£209	f/2.8	EX DG	ACNPS	71x67mm/320g	No	55mm	Macro	81%	Aug 06
SIGMA	50-150mm	£549	f/2.8	EX DC HSM	CNS	76x135mm/770g	Yes	67mm	Hypersonic motor		
SIGMA	50-500mm	£799	f/4-6.3	DG	ACFNPS	95x219mm/1840g	No	86mm	With or without HSM		
SIGMA	55-200mm	£109	f/4-5.6	DC	ACFNPS	72x87mm/310g	Yes	55mm	Budget supezoom		
SIGMA	70mm	£325	f/2.8	EX DG	ACNPS	76x95mm/525g	No	62mm	Useful macro	88% ○	Nov 06
SIGMA	70-200mm	£585	f/2.8	EX DG HSM	CNS	86x184mm/1270g	No	77mm	Hypersonic motor		
SIGMA	70-200mm	£749	f/2.8	EX DG HSM	CNS	87x184mm/1345g	No	77mm	Great tele zoom	92% ○	Sept 06
SIGMA	70-300mm	£99	f/4-5.6	DG	ACNPS	77x122mm/545g	No	58mm	Macro		
SIGMA	70-300mm	£159	f/4-5.6	DG	ACNPS	77x122mm/560g	No	58mm	Very capable lens	84%	Sept 07
SIGMA	80-400mm	£879	f/4.5-5.6	EX DG OS	CNS	95x192mm/1750g	No	77mm	Pro-spec EX lens		
SIGMA	100-300mm	£759	f/4	EX DG HSM	ACNPS	92x227mm/1440g	No	82mm	Pro-spec EX lens		
SIGMA	105mm	£289	f/2.8	EX DG	ACFNPS	74x98mm/460g	No	58mm	Macro	81%	Aug 06
SIGMA	120-300mm	£1679	f/2.8	EX DG HSM	CNS	113x271mm/2680g	No	105mm	Pro-spec EX lens		
SIGMA	135-400mm	£469	f/4.5-5.6	DG	ACNPS	84x184mm/1245g	No	77mm	SLD glass		
SIGMA	150mm	£439	f/2.8	EX DG HSM	CFNS	80x137mm/895g	No	58mm	Pro-spec EX lens		
SIGMA	170-500mm	£589	f/5-6.3	DG	ACNPS	93x232mm/1345g	No	86mm	APO and rear focus		
SIGMA	200-500mm	£TBC	f/2.8	EX DG	ttc	n/a	No	N/A	Abeast of a lens		
SIGMA	180mm	£459	f/3.5	EX DG HSM	ACNPS	80x182mm/965g	No	72mm	Pro-spec EX lens		
SIGMA	300mm	£1599	f/2.8	EX DG HSM	ACNPS	119x214mm/2400g	No	Drop-in	Pro-spec EX lens		
SIGMA	300-800mm	£4699	f/5.6	EX DG HSM	CNSF	157x544mm/5880g	No	Drop-in	Pro-spec EX lens		
SIGMA	500mm	£2599	f/4.5	EX DG HSM	ACNPS	123x350mm/3150g	No	Drop-in	Pro-spec EX lens		

			MIN APERTURE	DESIGNATION	MOUNT	SIZE & WEIGHT	DIGITAL ONLY	FILTER THREAD	COMMENT	SCORES	
SIGMA	800mm	£3799	f/5.6	EX DG HSM	ACNPS	156x521mm/4900g	No	Drop-in	Pro-spec EX lens		
SONY	11-18mm	£469	f/4.5-5.6	DT	A	80x81mm/360g	Yes	77mm	Ultra-wideangle zoom		
SONY	16mm	£689	f/2.8	-	A	75x67mm/400g	Yes	n/a	Fisheye		
SONY	16-80mm	£499	f/3.5-4.5	DT	A	83x72mm/440g	Yes	77m	Carl Zeiss optics		
SONY	18-70mm	£139	f/3.5-5.6	DT	A	66x77mm/235g	Yes	55mm	Average kit-lens	77%	Apr 07
SONY	18-200mm	£419	f/3.5-6.3	DT	A	73x86mm/405g	Yes	62mm	Expansive zoom range		
SONY	20mm	£599	f/2.8	-	A	78x54mm/285g	Yes	72mm	Wide zoom lens		
SONY	24-105mm	£419	f/3.5-4.5	-	A	71x69mm/395g	Yes	62mm	Compact wide to tele lens		
SONY	28mm	£169	f/2.8	-	A	65x43mm/185g	Yes	49mm	Standard wideangle lens		
SONY	35mm	£1049	f/1.4	G	A	69x76mm/510g	Yes	55mm	Fast standard lens		
SONY	50mm	£289	f/1.4	-	A	66x43mm/220g	Yes	55mm	Fast portraiture lens		
SONY	50mm	£419	f/2.8	-	A	72x60mm/295g	Yes	55mm	Macro		
SONY	70-200mm	£1829	f/2.8	G	A	87x197mm/1340g	Yes	77mm	Supersonic wave motor		
SONY	75-300mm	£179	f/4.5-5.6	-	A	71x122mm/460g	Yes	55mm	Good consistent perf.	78%	Sept 07
SONY	85mm	£1029	f/1.4	ZA T*	A	82x73mm/560g	No	72mm	Carl Zeiss		
SONY	100mm	£619	f/2.8	-	A	75x99mm/505g	Yes	55mm	Macro		
SONY	135mm	£1099	f/1.8	ZA T*	A	88x115mm/1050g	No	77mm	Carl Zeiss		
SONY	135mm	£899	f/2.8	T4.5 STF	A	80x99mm/730g	Yes	72mm	Soft focus effect		
SONY	300mm	£4399	f/2.8	G	A	122x243mm/2310g	Yes	n/a	Supersonic wave motor		
TAMRON	11-18mm	£429	f/4.5-5.6	SP Di-II XR	CN	82x79mm/375g	Yes	77mm	Pro spec SP lens	76%	Mar 07
TAMRON	14mm	£779	f/2.8	SP	CNP	87x87mm/675g	No	n/a	Pro spec SP lens		
TAMRON	17-35mm	£329	f/2.8-4	SP Di	CNP	83x87mm/440g	No	77mm	Great wide zoom	87% ○	June 05
TAMRON	17-50mm	£299	f/2.8	SP Di-II XR	CN	82x74mm/434g	Yes	67mm	Pro spec lens	88% ○	May 07
TAMRON	18-200mm	£319	f/3.5-6.3	Di-II XR	CNPS	73x84mm/423g	Yes	62mm	LD glass and IF		
TAMRON	18-250mm	£269	f/3.5-6.3	Di-II LD	CNP	84x74mm/430g	Yes	62mm	Sharp and great macro	83%	June 07
TAMRON	24-135mm	£325	f/3.5-5.6	SP AD IF	CNP	79x81mm/530g	No	72mm	Pro spec SP lens		
TAMRON	28-75mm	£299	f/2.8	SP Di	CNP	73x92mm/510g	No	67mm	Excellent all-rounder	88% ○	June 05
TAMRON	28-80mm	£89	f/3.5-5.6	-	CN	72x70mm/237g	No	58mm	Aspherical elements		
TAMRON	28-105mm	£99	f/4-5.6	-	CNPS	71x73mm/310g	No	62mm	Compact budget zoom		
TAMRON	28-200mm	£249	f/3.8-5.6	Di XR	CNP	71x75mm/354g	No	62mm	IF and macro		
TAMRON	28-300mm	£269	f/3.5-6.3	Di XR	CNP	73x84mm/420g	No	62mm	LD glass and IF		
TAMRON	55-200mm	£149	f/4-5.6	Di-II LD	CN	72x83mm/300g	Yes	52mm	Good long zoom	87% ○	Oct 06
TAMRON	70-300mm	£169	f/4-5.6	Di LD	CNP	77x177mm/435g	No	62mm	Average performance	80%	Sept 07
TAMRON	90mm	£329	f/2.8	SP Di	CNP	72x97mm/405g	No	55mm	Macro	89% ○	Aug 06
TAMRON	180mm	£899	f/3.5	SP Di LD	CN	85x166mm/920g	No	72mm	Macro		
TAMRON	200-500mm	£899	f/5-6.3	SP Di LD	CN	94x227mm/1237g	No	62mm	Pro spec SP lens		
TAMRON	300mm	£2199	f/2.8	IF	CN	120x214mm/2800g	No	Front	LD glass and IF		
TOKINA	10-17mm	£499	f/3.5-4.5	ATX DX	CN	70x71mm/350g	No	n/a	Fisheye		
TOKINA	12-24mm	£399	f/4	ATX DX PRO	CN	84x90mm/370g	Yes	77mm	Pro spec		
TOKINA	19-35mm	£139	f/3.5-4.5	AF	CNP	82x80mm/390g	No	77mm	Internal focusing		
TOKINA	24-200mm	£199	f/3.5-5.6	ATX	CNP	82x89mm/690g	No	72mm	SLD + aspherical glass		
TOKINA	50-135mm	£599	f/2.8	ATX DX PRO	CN	78x135mm/845g	No	67mm	Pro spec		
TOKINA	80-400mm	£819	f/4.5-5.6	ATX AF D	CN	79x137mm/1020g	No	72mm	SLD element		
TOKINA	100mm	£380	f/2.8	ATX D PRO	CN	73x95mm/540g	No	55mm	Macro		

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Need a flash to go with your DSLR? Here's our guide

What Flash

Many DSLRs have built-in flash units, which are adequate for general snaps, but have limitations. If you want to get creative with flash, or just fire out more power with better light, a separate unit is essential.

Like lenses, though, you need to find a flash that's compatible with your camera – a Canon flash won't work with a Nikon camera, for example. There are also independent manufacturers who make versatile and powerful units in a variety of fits, while you may want something more specialised such as a hammerhead or ring flash.

Modern units offer tremendous automation and much of the mathematics that used to be required when using flash is now redundant. However, manual control is still useful to have for unusual situations or creative purposes.

Another advantage of a separate flash unit is that it will offer faster recycling times than on-camera units, which is useful if you're taking many photographs quickly. There's also battery power to consider. Flash draws a lot of power, and this can seriously reduce the life of your camera battery, but a flashgun has its own batteries – usually a set of AAs. Finally, the danger of redeye is reduced as the light is further from the lens axis.

BUYING ADVICE: CHOOSING A FLASH

What to look for in a flashgun...

GN: The flash Guide Number indicates its power output (ie. how far the flash will reach at a certain aperture and ISO). The higher the figure, the more powerful the flash. If you divide the guide number by the shooting distance (in metres) you'll get your working aperture (or, divide it by your working aperture to get your shooting distance).

Coverage: Check the maximum wideangle coverage of a flash. If you're using a wideangle lens you need to ensure the flash can cover it, otherwise you will get flash fall-off – an effect similar to vignetting.

Batteries: Flash draws a lot of power, so it's worth investing in high-powered batteries – rechargeables are the most cost effective and eco-friendly – and remember to always carry a spare set. Some units also accept large rechargeable battery packs which provide thousands of flash cycles on a single charge.

Accessories: There are a number of flash accessories available, including diffusers, which soften the light for portraits, and coloured filters for special effects.

			GUIDE NUMBER	COMPATIBILITY	TILT / SWIVEL	LENS COVERAGE	SIZE / WEIGHT	COMMENTS	SCORES	
	Canon Speedlite 220EX	£115 Street price	22	Canon	No	28mm	65 x 92 x 61mm 160g	Basic flash for EOS users		NOT YET TESTED
	Canon Speedlite 430EX	£190 Street price	43	Canon	Yes	24mm	72 x 101 x 122mm 330g	Excellent performer with even illumination	90% What Digital Camera GOLD AWARD	TESTED NOV 05
	Canon Speedlite 580EX	£300 Street price	58	Canon	Yes	24mm	75 x 114 x 134mm 375g	Great performer. Expensive, but worth it	91% What Digital Camera GOLD AWARD	TESTED DEC 05
	Canon MR-14 EX	£375 Street price	14	Canon	n/a	n/a	n/a	Simple to use with manual mode for creative control	86% What Digital Camera RECOMMENDED	TESTED MAY 07
	Canon 580 EX II	£350 Street price	58	Canon	Yes	24mm	102 x 255 x 100mm 680g	The latest model has weatherproof connections		NOT YET TESTED
	Canon MT-24 EX	£650 Street price	24	Canon	n/a	n/a	n/a	Good illumination, especially for close-up shots	86% What Digital Camera RECOMMENDED	TESTED MAY 07
	Jessops 300 AFD	£100 Street price	30	Canon, Nikon, Pentax	Tilt only	28mm	-	Lightweight and plasticky, but excellent value for money	86% What Digital Camera RECOMMENDED	TESTED DEC 05
	Metz 36 AF-3	£70 Street price	36	Canon, Nikon, Minolta/ Sony	Tilt only	28mm	71 x 115 x 95mm 205g	Alternative to DSLR maker's own GN36 flash guns		NOT YET TESTED
	Metz 28 AF-3 digital	£95 Street price	28	Canon, Nikon	No	24mm	58 x 85 x 33mm 100g	Good value and easy to use but gives mixed results	84%	TESTED AUG 07
	Metz 44 MZ-2	£150 Street price	44	SCA 3002 - compat-ible with most	Yes	28mm	75 x 125 x 108mm 400g	Reasonably priced alternative to proprietary brand flash		NOT YET TESTED
	Metz 44 AF-4/ 44 AF-4i	£150 Street price	44	Canon, Nikon, Olym-pus, Minolta/ Sony	Yes	24mm	75 x 125 x 108mm 400g	AF4 - Canon, Minolta (Sony) and Olympus AF4i - Nikon		NOT YET TESTED
	Metz 54 AF-1	£180 Street price	54	Canon, Nikon, Minolta/ Sony	Yes	24mm	75 x 125 x 108mm 300g	Fairly basic for the price, but sturdy and well made	81%	TESTED NOV 05
	Metz 54 MZ-4/ 54 MZ-4i	£300 Street price	54	SCA 3002 - compat-ible with most DSLRs	Yes	20mm	75 x 125 x 108mm 480g	Fully featured and compatible with most cameras	92% What Digital Camera GOLD AWARD	TESTED DEC 06
	Metz 58 AF-1	£300 Street price	58	Canon, Nikon	Yes	18mm	-	USB socket to upgrade flash firmware if you change camera	88% What Digital Camera RECOMMENDED	TESTED MAR 07
	Metz 45 CL-4 digital	£320 Street price	45	SCA 3002 - compat-ible with most DSLRs	Yes	28mm	-	Hammer-head flash favoured by wedding snappers		NOT YET TESTED
	Metz 76 MZ-5 digital	£500 Street price	76	SCA 3002 - compat-ible with most DSLRs	Yes	24mm	-	High-end digital hammerhead		NOT YET TESTED
	Nikon SB-400	£150 Street price	21	Nikon	Tilt only	-	66 x 57 x 80mm 127g	Lightweight flash with unique tilting front	90% What Digital Camera GOLD AWARD	TESTED MAY 07
	Nikon SB-600	£210 Street price	30	Nikon	Yes	24mm	68 x 124 x 90mm 300g	As good as it gets for a mid-range flash, but pricey	90% What Digital Camera GOLD AWARD	TESTED NOV 05
	Nikon SB-800	£270 Street price	38	Nikon	Yes	24mm	71 x 127 x 92mm 350g	Faultless performer – fast, accurate and even	93% What Digital Camera GOLD AWARD	TESTED DEC 05
	Nikon R1C1	£500 Street price	10 @20	Nikon	Yes	n/a	68 x 96 x 58mm 160g	Wireless with even light and accurate illumination	89% What Digital Camera RECOMMENDED	TESTED MAY 07

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			GUIDE NUMBER	COMPATIBILITY	TILT / SWIVEL	LENS COVERAGE	SIZE / WEIGHT	COMMENTS	SCORES	
	Olympus FL-20	£110 Street price	20	Olympus E system	No	n/a	56 x 96 x 28mm 74g	*Useful, compact unit with even illumination and good colour*	85% What Digital Camera RECOMMENDED	TESTED AUG 07
	Olympus FL-36	£150 Street price	36	Olympus E system	Yes	16mm	65 x 105 x 95mm 270g	*Good performance for 4/3 Olympus users*	86% What Digital Camera RECOMMENDED	TESTED NOV 05
	Olympus FL-50	£290 Street price	50	Olympus E system	Yes	16mm	78 x 133 x 102mm 380g	*More than adequate, though sluggish recycling times*	87% What Digital Camera RECOMMENDED	TESTED DEC 06
	Olympus SRF-11	£460 Street price	11	Olympus E system	Yes	n/a	120 x 135 x 24mm 145g	*Easy to use and solid but limited in compatibility*	86% What Digital Camera RECOMMENDED	TESTED MAY 07
	Olympus STF-22	£630 Street price	16/ 22	Olympus E system	Yes	n/a	73 x 50 x 39mm 105g	*Simple to operate with excellent lighting control*	86% What Digital Camera RECOMMENDED	TESTED MAY 07
	Panasonic DMW FL-500E	£340 Street price	50	Panasonic FZ50 / L1	Yes	-	-	*Flash for Panasonic FZ50 / L1 cameras*		NOT YET TESTED
	Pentax AF-360 FGZ	£160 Street price	36	Pentax	Tilt only	24mm	206 x 89 x 79mm 270g	*TTL flash for *ist D and K series DSLRs*		NOT YET TESTED
	Pentax AF540 FGZ	£320 Street price	54	Pentax	Yes	24mm	76 x 142 x 107mm 380g	*Dedicated flashgun for Pentax users*		NOT YET TESTED
	Pentax Ringblitz AF-140C	£350 Street price	14	Pentax	n/a	n/a	n/a	*Dedicated ringflash for Pentax users*		NOT YET TESTED
	Samsung SEF-36 PZF	£155 Street price	30	Samsung GX Series	Tilt only	20mm	70 x 110 x 116mm 380g	*Will also work on Pentax K series cameras*		NOT YET TESTED
	Sigma EF500 DG ST	£110 Street price	50	Canon Nikon Pentax Sigma Sony	Yes	17mm	77 x 139 x 139mm 320g	*Won't win a beauty contest, but good performance and price*	86% What Digital Camera RECOMMENDED	TESTED NOV 05
	Sigma EF530 DG ST	£130 Street price	53	Canon Nikon Pentax Sigma Sony	Yes	17mm	77 x 139 x 117mm 305g	*One of two of the latest Sigma flashguns*		NOT YET TESTED
	Sigma EF500 DG super	£150 Street price	50	Canon Nikon Pentax Sigma Sony	Yes	17mm	77 x 139 x 117mm 325g	*Thoroughly recommended if you're on a tight budget*	89% What Digital Camera RECOMMENDED	TESTED DEC 05
	Sigma EF530 Super	£220 Street price	53	Canon Nikon Pentax Sigma Sony	Yes	17mm	77 x 139 x 117mm 335g	*One of two of the latest Sigma flashguns*		NOT YET TESTED
	Sigma EM140 DG macro	£250 Street price	14	Canon (ETTL) Nikon iTTL Sigma	n/a	n/a	127 x 129 x 31mm 430g	*Good power for macro and portrait work*		NOT YET TESTED
	Sony HVL F36AM	£150 Street price	36	Sony Alpha	Tilt only	17mm	71 x 124 x 91mm 261g	*Dedicated flash for Sony Alpha's 'unique' hotshoe*		NOT YET TESTED
	Sony HVL F56AM	£260 Street price	56	Sony Alpha	Yes	17mm	79 x 135 x 102mm 371g	*Wireless TTL control adds versatility*		NOT YET TESTED
	Sunpak PF30X	£95 Street price	30	Canon ETTL II Nikon iTTL	Tilt only	20mm	100 x 68 x 92mm 220g	*A solid performer with nice features at a decent price*	84%	TESTED AUG 07
	Samsung SEF-54 PZF	£300 Street price	45	Samsung GX Series	Yes	20mm	72 x 142 x 107mm 380g	*Guide number of 45 (not 54 as its name suggests...)*		NOT YET TESTED
	Sunpak PZ40X	£145 Street price	40	Canon ETTL II Nikon iTTL Minolta / Sony	Tilt only	24mm	98 x 63 x 90mm 205g	*Compact yet powerful unit, though features are limited*	84%	TESTED NOV 05

What Digital Camera

Need to Know

Dazed and confused? Our guide to all the techno-babble will ease your pain...

TTL: Through The Lens flash metering matches the exposure with the information taken by the camera's sensor to provide the perfect flash output and exposure.

WIRELESS SLAVE COMPATIBILITY: This lets the flash control several off-camera units, or slaves, sharing selected shooting data for a coherently managed portable lighting set-up without wires.

SWIVEL AND BOUNCE: Some units have flash heads that swivel and tilt, allowing you to bounce the light off a ceiling or wall to provide a softer, more diffused light.

AF ASSIST: The flash can supplement the camera's own illumination to provide more accurate autofocus at longer distances and in lower light conditions.

DIFFUSION LENS: A diffusion device built into the flash to increase the spread of the output to cover wideangle lenses.

ZOOM HEAD: Concentrates the energy of your flash when using telephoto lenses. Motorised zooms automatically alter the coverage to match the focal length of your lens.

FP SYNC: FP mode allows flash photography at any shutter speed by using a rapid pulse of light instead of a single burst, to illuminate the scene as the shutter travels across the sensor plane.

Flashguns to light up your photography

This Month's Picks

CANON 580EX

Why we love this flash...
With a guide number of 58, lightning-fast recycling time and an array of functions, the 580EX is one of Canon's top flashes and is a superb choice for the enthusiastic amateur, budding wedding photographer or professional.

SIGMA EF500 DG SUPER

Why we love this flash...
Lightweight and an all-round good performer, with a generous helping of features, Sigma's EF500 DG Super is one of the best value flashguns for under £150.

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You've got your gear... now where to put it?

What Bag

When you've spent a small fortune on a camera, lenses and other kit, you want to keep your investment protected. A decent camera bag is essential not just to carry your gear but to save it from bad weather, knocks and bumps and pilfering fingers.

From the funky urban style of Crumpler bags to the classic khaki canvas Billingham, there's a style of bag to suit everybody.

BUYING ADVICE: CHOOSING A BAG

Types of bag

Shoulder bags - Useful for easy access while on the move, with external pockets for cards, filters, etc.

Backpacks - Backpacks offer better support for your spine, especially if you have a lot of gear to carry. Some have space for laptops and straps for tripods but are less convenient for rapid access to gear though.

Sling bags - A hybrid shoulder/back pack offering an easy swing to the side for access.

Rolling cases - Cases with wheels and handles for carrying heavy equipment. Smaller versions also double as a backpack or briefcase.

Hard cases - Aluminium cases are ideal for airline travel or long-term storage/protection, and come in a range sizes from attaché case to large trunk-types.

Bags

RANGE	TYPE	PRICE FROM	NO OF MODELS	FEATURES	SCORE	
BILLINGHAM	Press Top	Shoulder	£130	3	Light weight, easy access		
BILLINGHAM	Packington	Shoulder	£145	1	Large canvas bag		
BILLINGHAM	Pro	Shoulder	£160	5	Deep, pockets, brass/leather fixtures		
BILLINGHAM	Hadley	Shoulder	£70	5	Briefcase design	82%	Apr 07
BILLINGHAM	L2	Shoulder	£80	1	Zipless and weatherproof		
CLUBMAN	Digital	Hard case	£20	2	Vacuum-formed briefcase with foam insert		
CLUBMAN	Ali	Hard case	£23	3	Aluminium with foam insert		
CRUMPLER	Half Photo	Backpack	£105	3	Dual compartment, security zips and backbrace		
CRUMPLER	Pretty Boy Maxi	Shoulder	£15	5	4 colours, protective seals		
CRUMPLER	Dick Casey Photo	Rolling case	£250	1	Extendable handle, removable dividers		
CRUMPLER	The Daily	Shoulder	£55	6	Long adjustable strap, laptop compartment		
CRUMPLER	Pretty Boy	Backpack	£75	1	4 colours, double compartment	82%	Oct 07
CRUMPLER	Full Photo	Backpack	£120	3	Security zips and backbrace		
DOMKE	J-Series	Shoulder	£100	4	Ballistic-grade nylon exterior and slimline padding		
DOMKE	Classic canvas	Shoulder	£80	7	Canvas exterior in a range of styles and sizes		
DOMKE	Ballistic	Shoulder	£80	4	Similar to Classic but with ballistic nylon	80%	Jul 06
DOMKE	Satchel	Shoulder	£80	2	Slimline briefcase design for camera and laptop		
JESSOPS	Fastnet	Shoulder	£10	2	Small, weatherproof and functional	83%	Mar 06
JESSOPS	Backpack	Backpack	£15	1	Small basic pack		
JESSOPS	Kamala	Shoulder	£17	2	Traditional style		
JESSOPS	Camcase	Hard case	£29	5	Strong, lockable case with partitions		
KATA	DC series	Hard case	£160	2	Well-padded suitcase-style cases		
KATA	SB series	Shoulder	£110	3	Well padded with rain cover		
KATA	WS series	Shoulder	£120	2	Rugged bag with waist belt		
KATA	EXO series	Shoulder	£70	2	Small bag with lower compartment		
KATA	PB series	Shoulder	£30	3	Small, general-purpose camera bags		
KATA	C series	Shoulder	£20	5	Small, rugged bags		
KATA	T series	Sling	£65	2	Comfort of backpack with ease of shoulder bag		
KATA	W series	Waist packs	£65	2	Easy carrying and access	84%	Aug 06
KATA	BP-502	Backpack	£260	1	Tough pack with laptop space		
KATA	HB series	Backpack	£170	2	Comfortable large hikers camera pack		
KATA	R-series	Backpack	£130	3	Easy access to central compartment		
LOWEPRO	DryZone	Backpack	£140	3	Fully waterproof packs with rubber seals		
LOWEPRO	SlingShot	Sling	£60	3	Hybrid shoulder/backpack with dual compartments		
LOWEPRO	Orion	Back/waist pack	£120	1	Combines easy access of a waist belt with comfort of backpack		
LOWEPRO	Rezo	Shoulder	£15	7	Small, general-purpose camera bags		
LOWEPRO	Omni	Back/Shoulder	£200	4	Designed to fit into a Trekker hard case		
LOWEPRO	Rover	Backpack	£120	2	Dual compartment packs for camera and clothes or food		
LOWEPRO	Road Runner	Rolling/Backpack	£270	2	Backpacks with wheels for heavy kit		
LOWEPRO	Stealth Reporter	Shoulder	£60	6	Photojournalist design with a wealth of features	87%	Jun 05
LOWEPRO	Compu	Backpack	£75	4	Designed for digital, with laptop space		
LOWEPRO	Trekker	Backpack/Roller	£90	7	A range of backpacks for different needs		
LOWEPRO	ProRoller	Rolling	£300	4	Heavy-duty shipping cases		
LOWEPRO	Vertex	Backpack	£109	3	Weatherproof backpacks		
LOWEPRO	Apex	Shoulder	£30	10	Small, single-compartment bags with weatherproofing		
NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC	Earth Explorer	Backpack	£120	2	Modular system with space for camping gear	85%	Sep 07
NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC	Earth Explorer	Shoulder	£80	2	Environmentally friendly bags	88%	Oct 07
NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC	Tripod	Backpack	£40	1	Tripod case with room for camera gear		
PELICAN	Peli	Hard Case	£25	28	Watertight hard cases with valves and o-rings		
SAMSONITE	Trekking Premium	Shoulder	£25	5	Good looking holdall-style bags (score applies to 140 model)	89%	Jun 05
STORM	IM series	Hard Case	£30	19	Hard waterproof cases with valves, 6 colours		
TAMRAC	Explorer	Shoulder	£20	4	Small SLR bags		
TAMRAC	System	Shoulder	£25	3	Bags with ballistic nylon (score applies to 6 model)	87%	Jun 05
TAMRAC	Expedition	Backpack	£40	5	Comfortable packs with modular accessories		
TAMRAC	Adventure	Backpack	£40	7	Dual compartments for food or clothes. Model 9 holds a laptop		
TAMRAC	Pro	Shoulder	£40	3	Tough weatherproof bags with digital management system	86%	Jul 06
TAMRAC	CyberPack	Backpack	£90	3	Ballistic grade with laptop compartments		
TAMRAC	Adventure Messenger	Shoulder	£17	3	Small, slimline bags	87%	Jan 07
TAMRAC	Travel Pack 7.1	Backpack	£30	1	Small backpack		
TAMRAC	Turbo Cyber Pro	Shoulder	£80	1	Briefcase style with laptop space		
TAMRAC	CyberPro	Rolling	£150	2	Briefcase design with wheels and laptop space		
TAMRAC	SpeedRoller 2	Rolling	£200	1	Suitcase-style roller with laptop space		
TAMRAC	CyberPack Express	Rolling/Backpack	£200	1	Rolling case with backpack harness and laptop space		
TAMRAC	Velocity	Sling	£30	5	Small to medium sling bags with easy carriage and access		
TAMRAC	Velocity 5	Waist pack	£35	1	Small bag with added waist belt		
TAMRAC	Digital Convertible	Shoulder	£40	1	Small bag with added waist belt		
TENBA	Shootout	Backpacks	£55	6	Pro packs in a variety of sizes		
TENBA	Pro Digital 2.0	Shoulder	£95	3	Pro shoulder bags with laptop space		
TENBA	Pro Digital 2.0	Backpack	£120	2	High-grade bags with laptop space		
TENBA	Metro	Shoulder	£70	5	Photojournalist style with laptop options		
TENBA	Pro Traveller II	Shoulder	£95	3	Rugged bags with ballistic nylon		

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What Tripod

It doesn't matter if you're shooting landscapes or the kids in your front room – if your camera isn't held steady, you're going to get blurred images.

The best solution is a tripod or monopod. The following list should help you to choose the right one for you.

Tripods

			MAX HEIGHT	MIN HEIGHT	FOLDED LENGTH	LEG SECTIONS	HEAD	WEIGHT		COMMENTS	SCORES	
BENBO	Mini Trekker	£64.99	71cm	0cm	55cm	1	No	1.5kg	n/a	Hook for camera bag / weight		
BENBO	Trekker Tripod Mkll	£134.49	150cm	0cm	84cm	2	Yes	2kg	n/a	Available as kit (with head) or legs only	84%	Mar 07
BENBO	1	£215.49	157cm	0cm	84cm	2	Yes	3.4kg	n/a	Sealed legs / waterproof		
BENBO	2	£237.99	256cm	0cm	114cm	2	Yes	3.75kg	n/a	Long-legged version of Benbo 1		
CALUMET	CX6143	£19.95	167cm	72cm	72cm	3	Yes	3.1kg	5kg	Outstanding value, reversible column	88% ○	Mar 06
CALUMET	7100	£69.99	147cm	23cm	54cm	4	Yes	2kg	5kg	Great for landscapes	85% ○	Feb 07
CALUMET	CX6011	£50.95	156cm	51cm	55cm	4	Yes	2.7kg	3.6kg	Solid all-rounder at good price		
CALUMET	7300	£69.99	172cm	27cm	62cm	4	Yes	2.6kg	5kg	Heavier version of 7100 kit	87% ○	Feb 07
CALUMET	CX6161	£105.44	165cm	71cm	77cm	3	Yes	3.1kg	9kg	Reversible column, but a little pricey		
CALUMET	CX6461	£114.99	206cm	56cm	81cm	3	Yes	5.8kg	5.8kg	Heavy duty tripod - ideal for the studio		
DIGIPOD	A2230	£54.95	112cm	49cm	53cm	3	Yes	0.9kg	2.5kg	Lightweight aluminium tripod		
DIGIPOD	A3240	£89.95	155cm	55cm	60cm	4	Yes	2.5kg	10kg	Heavyweight aluminium tripod		
DIGIPOD	C2530	£149.95	126cm	54cm	58cm	3	Yes	1.2kg	4.5kg	Carbon fibre		
DIGIPOD	C2840	£179.95	143cm	51cm	55cm	4	Yes	1.6kg	8kg	Solid, lightweight carbon fibre	87% ○	June 07
GIOTTOS	GB1140	£79.99	142cm	44cm	47cm	4	Yes	1.3kg	2.5kg	Ideal lightweight travelling companion	76%	Mar 07
GIOTTOS	MT9160	£109.99	160cm	-	60cm	3	Yes	2.8kg	10kg	Solid aluminium all-rounder		
GIOTTOS	MT9180	£129.99	180cm	-	59cm	4	Yes	3kg	12kg	Folds small, but extends higher than most		
GIOTTOS	GB4180	£129.99	179cm	66cm	72cm	3	Yes	3kg	10kg	Hanging hook, bubble level and compass		
GIOTTOS	MT8160	£229.99	160cm	-	60cm	3	Yes	2.5kg	10kg	Carbon fibre version of the MT9160		
GIOTTOS	MT8180	£289.99	180cm	-	59cm	4	Yes	2.6kg	10kg	Carbon fibre version of the MT9180		
GITZO	G2220	£224.95	162cm	0cm	64cm	3	No	2.3kg	9kg	Aluminium legs with tilting column		
GITZO	G1320	£279.95	191cm	49cm	76cm	3	No	3.3kg	13kg	Impressive extension, aluminium		
GITZO	G1410	£314.95	164cm	19cm	76cm	3	No	3.8kg	12kg	Optional columns		
GITZO	GT1550T	£464.95	146cm	36cm	41cm	5	No	1kg	4.5kg	5 leg sections for incredible compactness		
GITZO	GT2530EX	£464.95	170cm	0cm	68cm	3	No	1.4kg	12kg	Carbon fibre		
GITZO	GT3540	£599.95	161cm	10cm	61cm	3	No	2kg	18kg	Very solid carbon fibre legs		
MANFROTTO	055D / 055DB	£100	181cm	44cm	61cm	2	No	2.2kg	7kg	Available in silver (D) or black (DB)		
MANFROTTO	055PRO / 055PROB	£135	176cm	11cm	65cm	3	No	2.4kg	7kg	Great for low angles		
MANFROTTO	190MF4	£230	131cm	11cm	46cm	4	No	1.6kg	4kg	Magnesium / carbon fibre legs	88% ○	Mar 05
MANFROTTO	058 / 058B	£235	217cm	44cm	94cm	2	No	6.2kg	12kg	Geared column, heavy duty		
MANFROTTO	458B Nedtec	£275	156cm	10cm	64cm	3	No	2.4kg	8kg	Unique 'automatic' leg locks	85% ○	Mar 07
MANFROTTO	161MK2 / 161MK2B	£375	267cm	44cm	105cm	3	No	8kg	20kg	Rock solid, perfect studio tripod		
NAT. GEOG.	Tundra Ballhead	£54.95	152cm	17cm	46cm	5	No	0.9kg	1kg	Very compact travel 'pod	81%	Test 06
NAT. GEOG.	Expedition Carbon	£299.95	170cm	11cm	58cm	4	No	2.3kg	7kg	Carbon-fibre travelling companion		
NAT. GEOG.	Expedition Automatic	£329.95	160cm	11cm	69cm	3	No	3.2kg	8kg	Rebadged Manfrotto Nedtec 458B		
SLIK	U8000	£49.99	150cm	-	59cm	3	No	1.9kg	-	Lightweight, low cost		
SLIK	ABLE 300 DX	£69.99	155cm	-	66cm	3	No	2.6kg	-	Includes 3-way quick release head		
SLIK	PRO 330 DX	£139.99	160cm	29cm	60cm	3	Yes	1.6kg	5kg	Comes with Pro SH-705E head	86% ○	Mar 07
SLIK	PRO 700 DX	£189.99	190cm	62cm	76cm	3	Yes	3.2kg	6.8kg	Comes with Pro 700 DX head		
SLIK	PROFESSIONAL II	£299.99	170cm	-	68cm	3	No	3.2kg	-	Bubble level, reversible geared column		
UNILOC	1600	£99.89	153cm	0cm	81cm	2	No	2.4kg	-	Independent leg movements		
UNILOC	Major 1220	£129.89	122cm	0cm	68cm	2	No	3.1kg	-	Sealed, waterproof legs		
UNILOC	System 1700	£131.89	175cm	0cm	79cm	3	No	3.0kg	-	Converts to monopod		
UNILOC	Major 1600	£137.39	160cm	0cm	79cm	2	No	3.4kg	-	180° centre column joint		
VELBON	CX-300	£30.96	175cm	51cm	54cm	3	No	1.1kg	5kg	Budget tripod with fixed head		
VELBON	CX-540	£41.95	185cm	56cm	61cm	3	No	1.5kg	5kg	Heavier duty version of CX-300	73%	Mar 07
VELBON	ULTRALUXI F	£104.99	121cm	18cm	34cm	5	No	1kg	-	Compact model with twist lock legs	79%	Mar 05
VELBON	Sherpa 200	£89.99	168cm	59cm	62cm	3	No	1.9kg	3.5kg	Aluminium, with head		
VELBON	Sherpa 600R	£92.94	195cm	29cm	65cm	3	No	2.2kg	15kg	Aluminium, drops to near ground level		
VELBON	Sherpa Pro DF-631 EL	£199.99	156cm	17cm	55cm	3	No	1.3kg	-	Carbon fibre, hanging hook	88% ○	Mar 05

Ball and Socket Heads

		HEIGHT	WEIGHT	MAX LOAD	BUBBLE LEVEL	QUICK RELEASE	SCORES	
BENBO Compact B&S	£37.99	8cm	175g	8kg	no	no		
BENBO Pro B&S	£85.99	10cm	360g	12kg	no	no		
CALUMET Med. Ball	£16.96	-	-	4kg	yes	yes		
CALUMET QuickGrip	£19.95	-	-	-	yes	yes		
GIOTTOS MH1003-310	£29.99	7.2cm	160g	4kg	no	no		
GIOTTOS MH7001-621	£39.99	11cm	595g	6kg	yes	yes		
GIOTTOS MH1002-310	£44.99	8.5cm	209g	6kg	no	no		
GIOTTOS MH1000-300	£79.99	11.9cm	534g	10kg	no	no		
GIOTTOS MH3003-550	£99.99	15cm	1135g	15kg	no	no		
GITZO G0077	£29.95	6cm	100g	1kg	no	no		
GITZO G1178M	£107.95	9.5cm	400g	4kg	no	yes		
GITZO G1277M	£124.95	11.5cm	500g	6kg	no	no		
GITZO G1275M	£124.95	11cm	500g	5kg	no	no		
GITZO G1276M	£149.95	12cm	600g	5kg	no	yes		
GITZO G1378M	£214.95	14cm	1.1kg	8kg	yes	yes		
MANFROTTO 222	£190	21cm	780g	2.5kg	yes	yes		
MANFROTTO 322RC2	£100	10.3cm	700g	5kg	yes	yes		
MANFROTTO 468MG	£200	13cm	650g	16kg	no	yes		
MANFROTTO 468MGRC3	£230	12cm	800g	10kg	no	yes		
MANFROTTO 482 Micro	£25	5.9cm	110g	2kg	no	no		
NAT. GEOG. RC2	£224.95	12.4cm	700g	10kg	no	yes		
NAT. GEOG. RC5	£244.95	12.5cm	700g	12kg	no	yes		
SLIK Small Ball Head	£19.99	7.5cm	120g	1.6kg	no	no		
SLIK Ball Head 800	£89.99	12cm	760g	-	no	yes		
SLIK AF2100	£99.99	14cm	870g	4.5kg	no	yes		
VELBON QHD-41Q	£39.99	6.8cm	130g	1.5kg	no	yes		
VELBON QHD-51Q	£54.99	8.4cm	180g	3.5kg	no	yes		
VELBON QHD-61Q	£84.99	9cm	310g	5.5kg	yes	yes		
VELBON QHD-71Q	£99.99	10.7cm	450g	7.5kg	yes	yes		

Pan and Tilt Heads

		HEIGHT	WEIGHT	MAX LOAD	BUBBLE LEVEL	QUICK RELEASE	SCORES	
CALUMET CX3043	£19.95	-	-	5kg	yes	yes		
CALUMET CX3061	£29.99	-	-	5.8kg	yes	yes		
CALUMET CX7061	£44.96	-	-	-	yes	yes		
GIOTTOS MH5000	£44.99	12cm	790g	6kg	yes	no		
GIOTTOS MH5001	£49.99	12cm	820g	6kg	yes	yes		
GITZO G2271M	£184.95	10cm	700g	5kg	no	no		
GITZO G1570M	£184.95	10.5cm	1300g	10kg	no	no		
GITZO G2272M	£199.95	9.3cm	700g	5kg	no	yes		
MANFROTTO 056	£25	10cm	500g	3kg	no	no		
MANFROTTO 460MG	£60	10.5cm	430g	3kg	no	yes		
MANFROTTO 804RC2	£60	12cm	750g	4kg	no	yes		
MANFROTTO 229	£160	16cm	1900g	12kg	yes	yes		
VELBON PHD-31Q	£21.99	7cm	240g	-	no	yes		
VELBON PHD-41Q	£39.99	8.7cm	430g	-	yes	yes	86% ○	Apr 07
VELBON PHD-51Q	£109.99	12cm	670g	5kg	yes	yes		
VELBON PHD-61Q	£129.99	13.3cm	820g	5kg	yes	yes		

Monopods

		MAX HEIGHT	FOLDED LENGTH	LEG SECTIONS	HEAD	WEIGHT	SCORES	
BENBO Trekker Monopod	£29.99	160cm	89cm	2	Yes	600g		
GIOTTOS MM9970	£49.99	170cm	58cm	4	No	810g		
GIOTTOS MM5570	£59.99	177cm	64cm	4	No	1260g		
GIOTTOS MM8960	£89.99	180cm	60cm	4	No	650g		
GITZO G1564L	£109.95	202cm	60cm	5	No	1000g		
GITZO GM2340	£109.95	156cm	49cm	4	No	600g		
GITZO GM2941	£129.95	157cm	52cm	4	No	400g		
GITZO GM5540	£229.95	162cm	55cm	4	No	900g		
MANFROTTO 679B	£34	156cm	62cm	3	No	600g	87% ○	Sep 07
MANFROTTO 680	£44	154cm	51cm	4	No	830g		
MANFROTTO 682	£77	172cm	69cm	-	No	1150g		
NG Tundra Monopod	£30	156cm	48cm	5	Yes	390g	82%	Sep 07
SLIK Slim Pod	£24.99	153cm	48cm	4	No	290g	80%	Sep 07
SLIK Monopod 350	£29.99	160cm	51cm	4	No	300g	89% ○	Sep 07
VELBON Ultra Stick 40	£24.99	144cm	42cm	4	No	220g	78%	Sep 07
VELBON RUP-40	£29.99	158cm	49cm	4	No	360g	89% ○	Sep 07
VELBON Sherpa Pro 7	£94.99	170cm	53cm	4	No	760g		

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Everything you need to know when shopping for storage

What Portable Storage

Thanks to the rise of the portable media player, the once humble storage device market has seen rapid advances in recent years.

Buying storage no longer boils down to a choice of capacity and screen size; today's devices are not only capable of keeping your photos safe, many can also play video files including full-length movies. More advanced models even offer attachments enabling users to record digital TV. The ability to play MP3 music files is also a bonus – one that can provide a welcome soundtrack to photographers on the move. A high-quality LCD screen is a must, and in most cases bigger is definitely better.

BUYING ADVICE: CHOOSING A STORAGE DEVICE

What to look for in portable storage...

LCD: A larger colour LCD is easier to view, but don't forget about resolution. The more pixels the better.

Capacity: If you are going to use the device mainly as a media player, you may not need the largest capacity. If it's strictly for storage, bypass fancy features for the larger model.

File compatibility: Most accept all major image formats, but more-obscure video files may not be accepted by some devices.

We choose a couple of the best devices

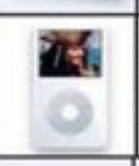
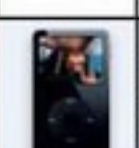
This Month's Top Picks

JOBO GIGA VU

Why we love this viewer...
With an excellent bright screen, Raw support and Wi-fi connectivity, the Giga Vu is available in up to 120GB capacities for the even the most prolific photographer.

EPSON P4000

Why we love this viewer...
A sturdy aluminium body encases masses of storage space and support for a variety of formats, with its 3.8in LCD screen bringing your images to life.

			CAPACITY	LCD	CARD SLOTS	SIZE & WEIGHT	FILE FORMATS	SCORES	
	Smart-Disk PhotoBank	£75 Street price	40GB	Storage only - no picture	CF SD MS SM	115 x 78 x 25mm 262g	Storage only - no image playback on LCD	78%	TESTED APR 2007
	Braun Pixel Bank	£90 Street price	60GB	Storage only - no picture	CF SD MS	125 x 75 x 29mm 250g	Storage only - no image playback on LCD	79%	TESTED APR 2007
	JOBO Giga One	£100 Street price	30GB (also 40GB 80GB 120GB)	Storage only - no picture	CF SD MS SM XD	115 x 78 x 25mm 254g	RAW, JPEG, MP3	84%	TESTED FEB 2006
	StorVision PSC-100	£100 Street price	40GB (also 80GB 100GB 120GB)	Storage only - no picture	CF SD MS xD SM	114 x 76 x 21 mm 262g	Storage only - no image playback on LCD		NOT YET TESTED
	Archos 404	£175 Street price	30GB	3.5in 320 x240 pixels	None Optional adaptor	100 x 78 x 15 mm 190g	MPEG, WMV, MP3, AAC, AC3, WMA, JPEG, PNG, BMP, PDF	81%	TESTED APR 2007
	Apple iPod 30Gb	£180 Street price	30GB	2.5in 320 x240 pixels	None Optional adaptor	103.5 x 61.8 x 11mm 136g	AAC, MP3, AIFF, WAV, Apple loss-less, MPEG, mov,m4v JPEG		NOT YET TESTED
	Jobo Spectator	£200 Street price	40GB (also 80GB 120GB)	2.5in 280 x320 pixels	CF (I+II) SD MS	129 x 78 x 23.7 mm 183g	JPEG		NOT YET TESTED
	Archos 504	£200 Street price	80GB (also 160GB)	4.3in 480 x272 pixels	None Optional adaptor	130 x 78 x 23 mm 315g	MPEG, WMV, MP3, AAC, AC3, WMA, JPEG, PNG, BMP, PDF	83%	TESTED APR 2007
	Apple iPod 80Gb	£225 Street price	80GB	2.5in 320 x240 pixels	None Optional adaptor	103.5 x 61.8 x 14mm 157g	AAC, MP3, AIFF, WAV, Apple loss-less, MPEG, MOV, M4V, JPEG		NOT YET TESTED
	Archos 604 WiFi	£240 Street price	30GB	4.3in 480 x272 pixels	None Optional adaptor	133 x 78 x 18 mm 290g	MPEG, WMV, MP3, AAC, AC3, WMA, JPEG, PNG, BMP, PDF		NOT YET TESTED
	SanDisk Sansa View	£250 Street price	8GB	4in 640 x 480 pixels	SD	78.5 x 123 x 16.9mm 264g	JPEG, MPEG, MP3		NOT YET TESTED
	Vosonic VP6230	£280 Street price	40GB (drives up to 120GB)	2.5in	CF SD MS xD SM	128 x 76 x 30mm 282g	JPEG, MP3, WMA, AVI, MPEG		NOT YET TESTED
	Epson P3000	£350 Street price	40GB	4in 640 x480 pixels 4 colour	CF, SD Optional adaptor for other types	150 x 88.7 x 33.1mm 426g	JPEG, RAW, MPEG, MP3, AAC, WMV, WMA	87% What Digital Camera	TESTED APR 2007
	Epson P4000	£320 Street price	80GB	3.8in 640 x480 pixels	CF, SD Optional adaptor for other types	147 x 84 x 31.4mm 415g	JPEG, RAW, MPEG, MP3, AAC	92% What Digital Camera GOLD AWARD	TESTED FEB 2006
	JOBO Giga Vu Pro Evolution	£340 Street price	40GB (also 120GB)	4in 640 x480 pixels	CF Optional adaptor for other types	145 x 107 x 38mm 420g	RAW, JPEG, MP3, MPEG, WAV	87% What Digital Camera	TESTED APR 2007
	Archos 704 WiFi	£350 Street price	40GB	7" 800 x480 pixels	None Optional adaptor	182 x 128 x 20mm 630g	JPEG, MP3, WMA, WAV, MPEG-2/4, WMV, AAC, AC3, PDF		NOT YET TESTED
	Canon M30	£360 Street price	30GB	3.7in 160 deg viewing angle	CF, SD	TBC 140x 81x 34mm	Canon RAW, JPEG, MPEG, WAV, MP3		NOT YET TESTED
	Epson P5000	£430 Street price	80GB	4in 640 x480 pixels 4 colour	CF, SD Optional adaptor for other types	150 x 88.7 x 33.1mm 430g	JPEG, RAW, MPEG, MP3, AAC, WMV, WMA	89% What Digital Camera	TESTED APR 2007
	Canon M80	£450 Street price	80GB	3.7in 160 deg viewing angle	CF, SD	TBC 140x 81x 34mm	Canon RAW, JPEG, MPEG, WAV, MP3		NOT YET TESTED

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Everything you need to buy the right memory card for your camera

What Memory Card

High speed, high capacity, SD, xD... memory cards come in many shapes and sizes, so let's make things clearer...

Your camera will, in the majority of cases, only accept one type of card. The most popular type is the SD card, although some manufacturers have specific card types dedicated to their cameras. Cards labelled as being 'high-speed' are able to transfer data faster than standard cards, but are usually more expensive. Some of the more-expensive cards even come with image-recovery software – useful if you're a bit clumsy and tend to delete pictures by mistake...

BUYING ADVICE: CHOOSING A CARD

What to look for in a memory card...

SD/SDHC

The most popular card format, SD cards are compatible with the most digital cameras. SDHC are the latest 'high-capacity' versions and not compatible with older cameras so check that your camera will take them before buying one. Some feature a built-in USB adaptor, so you can plug straight into your computer without the need for a separate card reader.

COMPACT FLASH

Coming in a wide variety of speeds, these are used in all the high-end DSLRs – where fast data transfer is more of an issue – and in some budget models too.

MEMORY STICK

Used by Sony cameras, Memory Stick comes in two main types – Pro and Pro Duo. Newer Sony cameras take the Pro Duo type, but can be used in older models with an adaptor.

XD

Exclusive to Fujifilm and Olympus cameras. Look out for type 'H' cards, which offer a faster data transfer rate than 'M' type cards. Also look out for those that support picture effects and panoramic shooting.

SD/SDHC

	CAPACITY	SPEED	COMMENTS
DELKIN eFilm	128MB-2GB	n/a	Standard speed SD card
DELKIN eFilmPRO	256MB-2GB	n/a	High-speed SD card
DELKIN eFilm HC PRO	4GB	Class 4 (150x)	SDHC
FUJI SD	256MB-2GB	n/a	
FUJI 60x	256MB-2GB	60x	
FUJI 60x	1GB-2GB	133x	High-speed SD card
KINGSTON TECH SD	512MB-2GB	n/a	Cheap SD
KINGSTON TECH ElitePro	512MB-2GB	50x	
KINGSTON TECH Ultimate	2GB	120x	High-speed SD card
KINGSTON TECH SDHC	4GB-8GB	Class 2, 4, 6	
KINGSTON TECH Micro/Mini SD to SD	512MB-2GB	n/a	Dual adaptor for micro and mini SD compatibility
LEXAR SD	256MB-2GB	n/a	
LEXAR Platinum II	256MB-2GB	60x	
LEXAR Professional	1GB-2GB	133x	
LEXAR SDHC	4GB	Class 2	SDHC /Includes image-rescue software
LEXAR SDHC Platinum II	4GB	60x	SDHC
LEXAR SDHC Professional	4GB	133x	SDHC
PANASONIC SD	512MB-1GB	Class 2	
PANASONIC SD	2GB	Class 4	
PANASONIC Pro High Speed	512MB	20MB/sec	
PANASONIC Pro High Speed	1GB-2GB	Class 6	High-speed SD card
PANASONIC SDHC	4GB	Class 4	SDHC
SANDISK Shoot & Store SD	64MB-256MB	n/a	
SANDISK Standard SD	128MB-2GB	n/a	
SANDISK SDHC	4GB-8GB	Class 2	SDHC
SANDISK Ultra II Plus	512MB-2GB	66x	Built-in USB adaptor
SANDISK Extreme III	1GB-2GB	133x	High-speed SD card
SANDISK Extreme III SDHC	4GB	133x	Super-fast SDHC

CF

	CAPACITY	SPEED	COMMENTS
DELKIN eFilm	128MB-4GB	55x	
DELKIN eFilmPRO	256MB-8GB	n/a	High-capacity
FUJI CF	256MB-1GB	20x	
FUJI CF	256MB-4GB	40x	
FUJI CF	1GB-4GB	100x	High-capacity
FUJI CF	1GB-4GB	150x	High-speed/capacity
KINGSTON TECH Standard	256MB-2GB	n/a	
KINGSTON TECH ElitePro	512MB-2GB	50x	
KINGSTON TECH ElitePro	4GB-8GB	45x	
KINGSTON TECH Ultimate High Perf.	1GB	100x	High-speed
KINGSTON TECH Ultimate High Perf.	2GB-8GB	133x	High-speed/capacity
LEXAR CF	256MB-1GB	n/a	
LEXAR Platinum II	256MB-2GB	80x	
LEXAR Platinum II	4GB	60x	Includes image-rescue software
LEXAR Professional	1GB-4GB	80x	Includes image-rescue software
LEXAR Professional	1GB-8GB	133x	High-speed/capacity
LEXAR Lock Tight	512MB-2GB	n/a	'Locked' access for greater security
LEXAR Professional UDMA	2GB-8GB	300x	Lightning-fast, high-capacity card
SANDISK Standard CF	256MB-4GB	n/a	5 year warranty
SANDISK Ultra II	512MB-8GB	66x	High-capacity
SANDISK Extreme III	1GB-16GB	133x	High-speed/capacity
SANDISK Extreme IV	2GB-8GB	266x	Lightning fast and high-capacity
SONY Compact Vault	5GB	96MB write/2MB read	New Sony CF

xD Card

	CAPACITY	SPEED	COMMENTS
DELKIN eFilm	256MB-1GB	n/a	Standard speed card
FUJI Type H	256MB-2GB	33x	Fast xD card
FUJI Type M	256MB-2GB	n/a	
OLYMPUS Type H	256MB-1GB	9MB write/15MB read	2-3x faster than type M, panoramic support
OLYMPUS Type M	256MB-2GB	2.5MB write/4MB read	

Memory Stick

	CAPACITY	SPEED	COMMENTS
DELKIN Memory Stick	64MB-128MB	n/a	
DELKIN Memory Stick Duo Pro	256MB-512MB	n/a	
LEXAR Memory Stick Duo with MagicGate	64MB-128MB	n/a	Standard card with Magicgate encryption
LEXAR Platinum II Pro	512MB-2GB	40x	Includes Corel Photo Album 6
LEXAR Platinum II Pro Duo	512MB-2GB	40x	Includes Corel Photo Album 6
SANDISK Pro	256MB-4GB	n/a	Standard Memory Stick Pro
SANDISK Pro Duo	256MB-4GB	n/a	
SANDISK Ultra II Pro Duo	512MB-4GB	66x	Low power consumption
SANDISK Extreme III	1GB-4GB	120x	Includes image-rescue software
SANDISK Extreme III Pro Duo	1GB-4GB	120x	High-speed
SONY Duo	128MB	n/a	
SONY Duo Pro	512MB-8GB	n/a	High-capacity
SONY Duo Pro High Speed	1GB-2GB	n/a	High-speed

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Everything you need to know to help you make the right choice

What Printer & Scanner

Decisions, decisions. Choosing a photo printer is no easy task with so many options to consider. Here's a run-down...

There are currently two main technologies in common use. By far the most popular are inkjets (known by Canon as Bubblejets). These use various methods (such as heat or a piezo crystal) to fire microscopically small dots of ink through fine nozzles onto the paper, at incredible speed. Dye-Sublimation printers (known as dye-sub or dye transfer), on the other hand, work by heating a sheet of dye-coated acetate and transferring some of it to the paper. The paper has to be passed several times through the printer as each colour layer (cyan, magenta and yellow) is laid down separately from consecutive donor sheets, and a protective coating applied at the end.

BUYING ADVICE: CHOOSING A PRINTER OR SCANNER

DPI OR PPI: Printers use dots per inch and scanners scan in pixels per inch, but the term dpi is often used for both. Always judge your purchase via the actual dpi/ppi resolution rather than the higher, artificial 'optimised' figure.

PRICE PER PRINT: It's hard to judge an inkjet print's cost – portraits use more magenta ink, landscapes use more cyan. Dye-subs are more easily estimated, as a ribbon/paper combination is sold at a fixed price. Some inkjet manufacturers are starting to do this too.

PAPER MATTERS: Just as we advise you to buy manufacturer's own, or high-quality third-party inks, it's also worth investing in good quality papers. Apart from the manufacturers' own, there are several fine art brands, which WDC regularly reviews.

A few of the best printers and scanners

This Month's Picks

EPSON PICTURE MATE 100

Why we love this compact printer...
The PictureMate 100 has been out a while but it's still a cracker nevertheless. It doesn't have the large LCD of the 500, but prints are sharp, with great colour, and its price makes it one of the best-value choices of its kind.

HP PRO B9180

Why we love this A3 desktop printer...
Built like a tank, the Photosmart Pro B9180 prints from 15x10cm up to A3 and the print quality is outstanding. While it may not the be the cheapest A3 printer on the market, it's the best that we've tested so far.

EPSON R800

Why we love this A4 desktop printer...
The R800 uses Epson's Ultra Chrome Hi Gloss inks, with a 7-colour line-up including red, blue and two blacks to maximise the range of colours it can reproduce. A further tank of 'gloss optimiser' ensures a beautiful sheen.

CANON 8400F

Why we love this flatbed scanner...
It's been around for a while but still offers great versatility and good-quality scans from both prints and film originals.

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Which best suits your photographic requirements: a compact or desktop printer, or perhaps a multifunctional?

Compact Printer →

With a choice of inkjet or dye-sub models, these printers produce 6x4" enprints. They easily connect directly to cameras or mobile phones, either by USB, Bluetooth, Infrared or even WiFi to allow immediate prints. Most also accept media cards and may have LCD screens for image browsing. Some have batteries allowing more portability. Cost per print can be high but that's the price of convenience.

← A4 Inkjet Printer

The most common desktop printers allow prints to A4 or smaller paper. Modern inkjets offer high quality and speedy printing, matching that of conventional photographic prints. Recent ink and paper advances have also dramatically improved the life-span of inkjet prints, which can now outlast colour silver halide prints. Look for models with card slots and direct USB connection for maximum usability.

A3 Inkjet Printer →

While some A3 printers merely up the maximum paper size, others offer more advanced features, particularly for professional and high-end enthusiasts. Some models from Epson and HP offer exceptional print longevity, and the inclusion of grey inks make these popular for black and white fine-art photographs. While they are expensive to run, the results can be outstanding.

← Multifunctional

Also known as 'All-in-one' devices, these machines free up your deskspace by providing printing, scanning, copying and even fax facilities in one unit. Quality is rising and prices dropping in this sector, but individual devices still provide the maximum quality scans and prints – for now. However, multi-functionals are great all-rounders, especially if your budget or desk space is limited.

Scanner →

The ubiquity of digital cameras means scanners are not as popular as they were in the past, but if you want to input prints and negatives onto your PC, then one is essential. Many flatbed scanners have adaptors for scanning sides or negs as well as prints, but for maximum quality from film originals consider a dedicated film scanner – especially if you have a lifetime's amount of film to scan.

What Digital Camera Need to Know

Dazed and confused? Our guide to all the techno-babble will ease your pain...

MAXIMUM PRINT SIZE

When buying a printer consider the maximum print size you'll need. The standard desktop printer prints up to A4 (around 8x12") but can also print smaller sizes. For serious enthusiasts and big print lovers, an A3 printer makes more sense. Although they're bigger, and more expensive to buy and run, the A3 / 16x12" prints they can make look very impressive. If that isn't big enough there are larger printers stlll, at correspondingly higher prices. However, one of the biggest growth areas recently is in 6x4" printers. Although they can only do enprints, they're small and portable (some even offer a battery pack option for use 'in the field') and ideal for rattling off a quick print from your photos.

INK CARTRIDGES

Budget and non-photo printers tend to contain cartridges with just the four standard colours (cyan, magenta, yellow and black – CMYK). In some cases the three colours are contained in a single cartridge so that when, say, the yellow runs out, you have to replace it even though you may have loads of cyan left. Single ink cartridges solve this problem, but at a slightly higher cost for a full set (though they can work out cheaper in the long run). For true photo-realistic colour however, four colours isn't enough to capture the subtle hues of real life, so manufacturers add intermediate colours such as light magenta, or photo cyan. More advanced printers may have six or eight separate tanks.

INK TYPE

Most printer inks are made from dye. They can produce stunning results but until recently there were serious questions over their archival longevity, with reports of prints fading in just months. Manufacturers have worked hard to improve on this, with some success, but even the best dyes cannot compete with pigment-based inks when it comes to colour-fastness. Pigment inks are more expensive but don't fade as quickly. The disadvantage is their more matte finish, which is less easily absorbed into glossy papers and can diminish their sheen. The latest top-of-the-range inks (eg Epson's Ultrachrome ink) are a combination of dye and pigment to offer the best of both worlds. Incidentally, for quality, reliability and longevity reasons, we don't advise the use of cheap third-party inks (though the more expensive specialised inks are okay).

CONNECTIVITY

Once, if you wanted to use a printer, you needed to first switch on your PC and control it through that. Then manufacturers hit on the idea of adding slots for camera media cards, so you take the card out of the camera, pop it into the printer and get a print without going near a PC. Then PictBridge was invented, which allows you to transfer images from your camera to your printer via a USB cable, and control the printer from the back of the camera. Most printers offer PictBridge now, and many also have card slots. Some of the newest printers now offer Bluetooth for the wireless transfer of images. All printers can, of course, still be connected to a PC too.

DYE SUBLIMATION

An alternative to inkjet – which places drops of ink onto paper – is dye-sub. This uses ribbons with thermal dyes placed onto specially coated paper. The results can vary depending on manufacturer, but they often look much more like traditional photo prints. Most commonly used by compact printers, but there are also some A4 models from Kodak and Olympus, among others.

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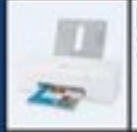
Compact Printers

			TYPE	RESOLUTION	INKS	BORDERLESS	COMMENTS	SCORES	
	Lexmark P350	£40 Street price	Inkjet	6x4" 4800 x1200 DPI	3 colour CMY	Yes	*Card Slots PictBridge 2.4" LCD USB 2.0 Hi-Speed*	87% What Digital Camera RECOMMENDED	TESTED DEC 06
	Epson Picture-Mate 100	£60 Street price	Inkjet	6x4" 5760 x1440 DPI	4 colour CMYK	Yes	*Card Slots PictBridge 1.5" LCD*	89% What Digital Camera RECOMMENDED	TESTED DEC 05
	Sony DPP-FP35	£60 Street price	Dye-sub	6x4" 300 DPI	3 colour CMY	Yes	*PictBridge*		NOT YET TESTED
	Agfa Photo APII00	£75 Street price	Dye-sub	6x4" 300 DPI	3 colour CMY	Yes	*Wi-fi, bluetooth and infrared compatible*		NOT YET TESTED
	HP Photo-smart A618	£75 Street price	Inkjet	6x4" 5x7" 4x12" 4800 DPI	3 colour CMY+ Vivera	Yes	*Card Slots PictBridge 2.5" LCD USB 2.0*	86% What Digital Camera RECOMMENDED	TESTED TEST 06
	Canon SELPHY CP740	£75 Street price	Dye-sub	6x4" 300 DPI	3 colour CMY+ over coating	Yes	*Card Slots PictBridge Integrated USB cable 1.5" LCD*		NOT YET TESTED
	Panasonic KX-PX2E	£85 Street price	Dye-sub	6x4" 300 DPI	3 colour CMY+ Overcoat	Yes	*SD card slot PictBridge 1.5" LCD*		NOT YET TESTED
	Canon Pixma Mini 260	£90 Street price	Inkjet	6x4" 9600 x2400 DPI	4 colour CMYK	Yes	*Card Slots PictBridge USB 2.0 Hi-Speed 2.5" LCD*		NOT YET TESTED
	Canon Selphy DS 810	£95 Street price	Inkjet	6x4" 4800 x 1200 DPI	4 colour CMYK	Yes	*Card Slots PictBridge 2.5" LCD USB*	84%	TESTED JAN 06
	Sony DPP-FP55	£100 Street price	Dye-sub	6x4" 300 DPI	3 colour CMY	Yes	*SD/MS Card slots PictBridge 2.0" LCD*	82%	TESTED NOV 06
	Epson Picture-Mate 500	£100 Street price	Inkjet	6x4" 5760 x1440 DPI	6 colour CMYK + Light Cyan Light Mag.	Yes	*Card Slots PictBridge 2.4" LCD*	91% What Digital Camera GOLD AWARD	TESTED DEC 06
	Epson Picture-Mate 240	£100 Street price	Inkjet	6x4" 5760 x1440 DPI	4 colour CMYK	Yes	*Card Slots PictBridge 2.5" LCD*	85% What Digital Camera RECOMMENDED	TESTED JAN 07
	Kodak Easy-Share 500	£100 Street price	Dye-sub	6x4" 300 DPI	3 colour CMY	Yes	*Card Slots PictBridge 3.5" LCD BlueTooth*		NOT YET TESTED
	HP Photo-smart A710	£100 Street price	Inkjet	6x4" 4800 x1200 DPI	3 colour CMY	Yes	*Card Slots PictBridge 2.5" LCD USB 2.0 46b memory*		NOT YET TESTED
	Agfa Photo AP2300	£100 Street price	Dye-sub	6x4 300 DPI	3 colour CMY	Yes	*Multi-format card reader PictBridge 2.4" LCD*		NOT YET TESTED
	Canon Selphy ES1	£110 Street price	Dye-sub	6x4" 300 x600 DPI	3 colour CMY+ over coating	Yes	*Card Slots PictBridge Integrated USB cable 2.5" LCD*		NOT YET TESTED
	Canon Selphy CP750	£120 Street price	Inkjet	6x4" 4800 x1200 DPI	3 colour CMY	Yes	*Card Slots PictBridge USB 2.0 2.5" LCD*		NOT YET TESTED
	Sagem Photo Easy 260	£130 Street price	Dye-sub	6x4" 300 DPI	3 colour CMY	Yes	*Windows PC only PictBridge Infra Red*	83%	TESTED JUL 07
	Panasonic KX-PX20E	£160 Street price	Dye-sub	6x4" 300 DPI	3 colour CMY+ Overcoat	Yes	*SD card slot PictBridge 3.6in LCD*		NOT YET TESTED
	Epson Picture-Mate 280	£185 Street price	Inkjet	6x4" 5760 x1440 DPI	4 colour CMYK	Yes	*Card Slots PictBridge 2.5" LCD Built-in CD-RW/CD-R*		NOT YET TESTED

A4 Desktop Printers

			TYPE	RESOLUTION	INKS	BORDERLESS	COMMENTS	SCORES	
	Canon iP1800	£35 Street price	Inkjet	A4 4800 x1200 DPI	4 colour CMYK Chroma Life 100 Pigment K	Yes	*PictBridge USB 2.0*	83%	TESTED JULY 07
	Epson D92	£40 Street price	Inkjet	A4 5760 x1440	4 colour CMYK DuraBrite Ultra Ink	Yes	*PictBridge USB 2.0*		NOT YET TESTED
	Canon iP2500	£45 Street price	Inkjet	A4 4800 x1200 DPI	4 colour CMYK Chroma Life 100 Pigment K	Yes	*PictBridge USB 2.0 Hi-speed*		NOT YET TESTED
	Lexmark Z845	£55 Street price	Inkjet	A4 4800 x1200 DPI	4 colour CMYK 2 ink tanks	Yes	*Optional 6 colour printing USB 2.0 PictBridge*		NOT YET TESTED
NEW	Canon iP3500	£60 Street price	Inkjet	A4 4800 x1200 DPI	4 colour CMYK Single ink tanks	Yes	*USB 2.0 ChromaLife 100 Tech. PictBridge*		NOT YET TESTED
	Epson Stylus Photo R220	£70 Street price	Inkjet	A4 5760 x1440 DPI	6 colour CMYK dye, light CM Single ink tanks	Yes	*Print onto CD/DVD PictBridge*		NOT YET TESTED
	Epson Stylus Photo R240	£70 Street price	Inkjet	A4 5760 x1440 DPI	4 colour CMYK dye Single ink tanks	Yes	*PictBridge USB 2.0 Card slots*	87% What Digital Camera RECOMMENDED	TESTED FEB 06
	Epson Stylus Photo R265	£75 Street price	Inkjet	A4 5760 x1440 DPI	6 colour CMYK dye, light CM Single ink tanks	Yes	*PictBridge Print to CD/DVD Claria ink*	82%	TESTED JULY 07
	HP D5160	£80 Street price	Inkjet	A4 4800 x1200 DPI	6 colour Dye CMYK Light CM 3 ink tanks	Yes	*PictBridge Card slots USB 2.0*		NOT YET TESTED
NEW	Canon iP4500	£80 Street price	Inkjet	A4 9600 x2400 DPI	5 colour CMYK Pigment K	Yes	*PictBridge USB 2.0 CD/DVD direct print*		NOT YET TESTED
	Epson Stylus R360	£85 Street price	Inkjet	A4 5760 x1440 DPI	6 colour CMYK dye, light CM Single ink tanks	Yes	*PictBridge Card slots 3.5in LCD Print to CD/DVD Claria ink*	88% What Digital Camera RECOMMENDED	TESTED JULY 07
	Canon iP5300	£95 Street price	Inkjet	A4 9600 x2400 DPI	5 colour CMYK dye Pigment K Single ink tanks	Yes	*PictBridge USB 2.0 Hi-speed*	91% What Digital Camera GOLD AWARD	TESTED JULY 07
	HP D7160	£95 Street price	Inkjet	A4 4800 x1200 DPI	6 colour Dye CMYK Light CM Single ink tanks	Yes	*PictBridge Card slots USB 2.0*		NOT YET TESTED
	Canon iP6700D	£110 Street price	Inkjet	A4 9600 x2400 DPI	6 colour CMYK dye, pale CM Single ink tanks	Yes	*PictBridge Card slots 3.5in LCD USB 2.0 Hi-speed*		NOT YET TESTED
	HP D7360	£120 Street price	Inkjet	A4 4800 x1200 DPI	6 colour Dye CMYK Light CM Single ink tanks	Yes	*PictBridge Card slots USB 2.0*	86% What Digital Camera RECOMMENDED	TESTED JULY 07
	Epson Stylus Photo R340	£120 Street price	Inkjet	A4 5760 x1440 DPI	6 colour CMYK dye, light CM Single ink tanks	Yes	*PictBridge Card slots 2.4in LCD Print to CD/DVD*		NOT YET TESTED
	Canon iP90V	£170 Street price	Inkjet	A4 4800 x1200 DPI	4 colour CMYK Pigment K Chroma Life 100	Yes	*PictBridge IRDA Optional: BlueTooth Battery pack USB 2.0*		NOT YET TESTED
	Epson Stylus R800	£225 Street price	Inkjet	A4 5760 x1440 DPI	8 colour CMYKKRB + Gloss optimiser	Yes	*PictBridge UltraChrome Hi Gloss ink Photo & matt black inks*	88% What Digital Camera RECOMMENDED	TESTED MAR 05
	Olympus P-440	£340 Street price	Dye-sub	A4 314 DPI	3 colour CMY + overcoat	No	*xD card slot 1.8in LCD USB 1.1*	87% What Digital Camera RECOMMENDED	TESTED FEB 04
	Kodak I400	£360 Street price	Dye-sub	A4 301 DPI	3 colour CMY + overcoat	No	*Gloss or matt overcoat depending on ribbon used*	89% What Digital Camera RECOMMENDED	TESTED NOV 05

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A3 Desktop Printers

			TYPE	RESOLUTION	INKS	BORDERLESS	COMMENTS	SCORES	
	Canon iX4000	£200 Street price	Inkjet	A3+ 4800 x1200 DPI	4 colour Dye CMYK Single ink tanks	Yes	PictBridge USB 2.0 Hi-speed	81%	TESTED JULY 06
NEW	Canon iX5000	£240 Street price	Inkjet	A3+ 4800 x1200 DPI	4 colour Dye CMYK Single ink tanks	Yes	PictBridge USB 2.0 Hi-speed		NOT YET TESTED
	Epson Stylus Photo I400	£270 Street price	Inkjet	A3+ 5760 x1440 DPI	6 colour Dye CMYK Light CM Single ink tanks	Yes	Print to CD / DVD Claria ink USB 2.0 Hi-speed	90% What Digital Camera GOLD AWARD	TESTED APR 07
	Epson Stylus Photo R1800	£370 Street price	Inkjet	A3+ 5760 x1440 DPI	8 colour CMYRBKK + gloss optimiser	Yes	UltraChrome Hi-Gloss ink USB 2.0 Hi-speed/ Firewire	89% What Digital Camera RECOMMENDED	TESTED OCT 05
	Canon Pro 9000	£400 Street price	Inkjet	A3+ 4800 x2400 DPI	8 colour Dye CMYKRG pale CM Single ink tanks	Yes	PictBridge USB 2.0 Hi-speed	88% What Digital Camera RECOMMENDED	TESTED MAR 07
	HP B9180	£430 Street price	Inkjet	A3+ 4800 x1200 DPI	8 colour Pigment Inc. 3x grey inks	Yes	Vivera ink	93% What Digital Camera GOLD AWARD	TESTED MAY 06
	Epson Stylus Photo R2400	£470 Street price	Inkjet	A3+ 5760 x1440 DPI	8 colour CMYK Light CMK Light light K	Yes	UltraChrome K3 ink USB 2.0 Hi-speed/ Firewire	90% What Digital Camera GOLD AWARD	TESTED OCT 05
NEW	Canon Pixma Pro 9500	£550 Street price	Inkjet	A3+ 4800 x 2400 DPI	10 Colour	Yes	FINE print technology/ Fine art paper support/ USB 2.0 Hi-speed		TESTED OCT 2007

Multi Functional

			PRINTER	RESOLUTION	SCANNER	FAX	COMMENTS	SCORES	
	Lexmark X4550	£100 Street price	Inkjet Four colour CMYK (Opt. 6 col)	A4 4800 x1200	A4 Flatbed 600x 1200 DPI 19200 x 19200 DPI (enhanced)	No	Card slots PictBridge	84% What Digital Camera RECOMMENDED	TESTED AUG 2007
	Epson Stylus RX520	£120 Street price	Inkjet Four colour CMYK	A4 5760 x1440 DPI	A4 Flatbed 35mm film 2400 x 1200 DPI	No	Card slots 1.5in LCD Copier USB 2.0 Hi-speed	90% What Digital Camera GOLD AWARD	TESTED MAY 2006
	Epson Stylus RX560	£130 Street price	Inkjet Six colour CMYK Light CM	A4 5760 x1440 DPI	A4 Flatbed 35mm film 2400 x 1200 DPI	No	Card slots 2.5in LCD Copier USB 2.0 Hi-speed	88% What Digital Camera RECOMMENDED	TESTED AUG 2007
	Kodak 5300	£140 Street price	Inkjet Six colour CMYK Pht B	A4 5760 x1440 DPI	A4 Flatbed tbc	No	PictBridge, 2 cartridge system	89% What Digital Camera RECOMMENDED	TESTED AUG 2007
	Canon Pixma MP600	£130 Street price	Inkjet Five colour CMY 2xK	A4 9600 x2400 DPI	A4 Flatbed 2400 x 4800 DPI	No	Card slots 2.5in LCD Copier USB 2.0 Hi-speed	91% What Digital Camera GOLD AWARD	TESTED AUG 2007
	Canon Pixma MP530	£150 Street price	Inkjet Four colour CMYK	A4 4800 x1200 DPI	A4 Flatbed 2400 x 1200 DPI	Yes	Card slots Copier, Fax USB 2.0 Hi-speed	82%	TESTED AUG 2006
	HP C5180	£170 Street price	Inkjet Six colour CMYK Light CM	A4 4800 x1200 DPI	A4 Flatbed 4800 x 2400 DPI	No	Card slots 2.4in LCD Copier	87% What Digital Camera RECOMMENDED	TESTED DEC 2006
	Epson Stylus RX640	£180 Street price	Inkjet Six colour CMYK Light CM	A4 5760 x1440 DPI	A4 Flatbed 35mm film 6400 x 3200 DPI	No	Card slots 2.5in LCD Copier USB 2.0 Hi-speed		NOT YET TESTED
NEW	Canon MP 970	£250 Street price	Inkjet Seven colour	A4 9600 x2400 DPI	A4 Flatbed 35mm film Mnt. slide 4800 x 9600 DPI	No	Card slots Ethernet networking 7 single inks ChromaLife 100 inch.		NOT YET TESTED

Scanners

			TYPE	RESOLUTION	TRANSPARENCY	D-Max	OTHER	SCORES	
	Canon LiDE 90	£60 Street price	Flat-bed	2400 x4800 ppi	-	-	16 / 8 bit USB 2.0 Hi-speed		NOT YET TESTED
	HP Scanjet 3800	£60 Street price	Flat-bed	2400 x4800 ppi	35mm	-	16 / 8 bit USB 2.0 Hi-speed		NOT YET TESTED
	Epson V100	£65 Street price	Flat-bed	3200 x9600 ppi	35mm	3.20	16 / 8 bit USB 2.0 Hi-speed		NOT YET TESTED
	HP Scanjet G3010	£75 Street price	Flat-bed	4800 x9600 ppi	35mm	3.20	48 bit USB 2.0 Hi-speed		NOT YET TESTED
	Canon LiDE 600F	£95 Street price	Flat-bed	4800 x9600 ppi	35mm	-	16 / 8 bit FARE level 3 USB 2.0 Hi-speed		NOT YET TESTED
	Epson V350	£100 Street price	Flat-bed	4800 x9600 ppi	35mm	3.20	16 / 8 bit USB 2.0 Hi-speed		NOT YET TESTED
	HP Scanjet G4010	£120 Street price	Flat-bed	4800 x9600 ppi	35mm	-	48 bit USB 2.0 Hi-speed		NOT YET TESTED
	Epson 4490	£130 Street price	Flat-bed	4800 x9600 ppi	35mm 120	3.40	16 / 8 bit Digital ICE USB 2.0 Hi-speed	91% What Digital Camera GOLD AWARD	TESTED MAY 06
	Canon 8400F	£140 Street price	Flat-bed	3200 x6400 ppi	35mm 120	3.30	16 / 8 bit FARE level 3 USB 2.0 Hi-speed	91% What Digital Camera GOLD AWARD	TESTED APR 05
	Canon 8800F	£150 Street price	Flat-bed	4800 x 9600 ppi	35mm 120	-	16 / 8 bit FARE level 3 USB 2.0 Hi-speed		NOT YET TESTED
	HP Scanjet 4890	£170 Street price	Flat-bed	4800 x9600 ppi	35mm 120 5x4"	-	16 / 8 bit USB 2.0 Hi-speed	81%	TESTED MAR 06
	HP Scanjet G4050	£200 Street price	Flat-bed	4800 x9600 ppi	35mm 120 5x4"	-	48 bit Dust & scratch removal USB 2.0 Hi-speed		NOT YET TESTED
	Plustek OpticFilm 7200i	£250 Street price	Film	7200 ppi	35mm	3.30	16 / 8 bit Infrared dust & scratch removal USB 2.0 Hi-speed		NOT YET TESTED
	Epson 4990	£260 Street price	Flat-bed	4800 x9600 ppi	35mm 120 5x4" 10x8"	4.00	16 / 8 bit Digital ICE USB 2.0 Hi-speed	90% What Digital Camera GOLD AWARD	TESTED MAY 05
	Epson V700	£350 Street price	Flat-bed	6400 x9600 ppi	35mm 120 5x4" 10x8"	4.00	16 / 8 bit Digital ICE USB 2.0 Hi-speed Firewire	92% What Digital Camera GOLD AWARD	TESTED MAY 06
	Canon 9950F	£370 Street price	Flat-bed	4800 x9600 ppi	35mm 120 5x4" 10x8"	3.80	16 / 8 bit FARE level 3 USB 2.0 Hi-speed Firewire		NOT YET TESTED
	Nikon Coolscan V	£460 Street price	Film	4000 ppi	35mm	4.20	16 / 8 bit Digital ICE USB 2.0		NOT YET TESTED
	Epson V750	£490 Street price	Flat-bed	6400 x9600 ppi	35mm 120 5x4" 10x8"	4.00	16 / 8 bit Digital ICE USB 2.0 Hi-speed Firewire Fluid mount	92% What Digital Camera GOLD AWARD	TESTED AUG 06
	Nikon Coolscan 5000	£800 Street price	Film	4000 ppi	35mm	4.80	16 / 8 bit Digital ICE USB 2.0		NOT YET TESTED
	Nikon Coolscan 9000	£2000 Street price	Film	4000 ppi	35mm 120	4.80	16 / 8 bit Digital ICE Firewire		NOT YET TESTED

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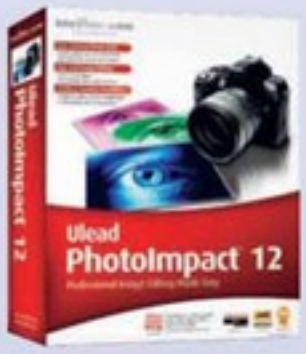
The best applications to sort, edit and enhance your images

What Software

For a lot of people, digital photography means just taking their memory card to a high-street lab and getting prints made. For others, it means storing images on the computer, making montages, or building web galleries.

There's a bewildering variety of software available to facilitate everyone's needs and budget – from simple, automated fixes to powerful image-editing suites.

Imaging software tends to fall into several categories. The most well-known is image enhancement and manipulation software, such as the ubiquitous Adobe Photoshop. Then there's the plethora of organising, viewing and image-management software. These categories are beginning to merge with the latest-generation apps such as Photoshop Elements 5 and Corel PaintShop Pro Photo XI, which perform both functions. Raw processing software, designed specifically for working with Raw image files, is a growing sector. And then of course there are the many specialist applications and Photoshop plug-ins that do specific things such as create panoramas, sharpen your pictures or enlarge them beyond their natural size.



WDC regularly tests the most popular, the most useful and even some of the more unusual software designed to help you get the best from your images. And some of it is even free!

BUYING ADVICE: CHOOSING SOFTWARE

What to look for

Download or CD? Many smaller applications can only be downloaded from the web, but for bigger applications this can be time consuming if you don't have a fast broadband connection. A CD version also ensures you have a back-up copy should you suffer any PC problems. Make a back-up CD of any software you download, to be on the safe side.

Judge your needs While we love Adobe Photoshop at WDC, it's a complicated program and unnecessary if you just want to view your pictures and fix the occasional redeye problem.

System requirements Check you're buying software that's compatible with your system – Mac software won't work on a PC and some programs require powerful processors, graphic cards or RAM capacity.

Keep up to date Check for software updates – bug-fixes, security updates or even new technology is often added to software on an ongoing basis. These should be free from the developer's website, though new full versions of software usually have to be paid for, either for a reduced rate upgrade price or for full price.

Check the dollar signs Many downloads come from the US, so be aware of the exchange rate; you may save money by buying when the pound is stronger.

			TYPE	PLATFORM	SUMMARY	SCORES	
	Adobe Photoshop Album SE www.pixellantec.com	FREE	Organising software	Win	This starter edition is easy to use and the photo-sharing functions are well worth a look	76%	TESTED FEB 2007
Snapfire	**Corel Snapfire LJ** www.corel.com	FREE	Organising software	Win	A fun, well thought out program. Digital newbies will like Snapfire's friendly look and easy to use dialogues	80%	TESTED FEB 2007
	GIMP 5 www.gimp.org	FREE	Image editing suite	Win/ Mac/ Unix	Very powerful photo-editing tools with support for layers, channels etc. Good expandability	87% What Digital Camera	TESTED FEB 2007
	Google Picasa 2 www.google.com	FREE	Organising software	Win	Easy to use with powerful search tools, this brings the power of Google to your pictures folder	85% What Digital Camera	TESTED FEB 2007
	IrfanView 4 www.irfanview.com	FREE	Image editing suite	Win	For those wanting to explore the potential of freeware Photoshop filters without having Photoshop	78%	TESTED FEB 2007
	Kodak Easyshare 6.3 www.kodak.com	FREE	Organising software		Most compact users will find all the tools they need plus advanced browsing features	78%	TESTED SEP 2006
	PosteRazor http://posterazor.sourceforge.net	FREE	Printing enlargement software	Win/ Mac	'Image-tiling' software enabling you to make big prints without a big printer	88% What Digital Camera	TESTED MAY 2007
	Restoration 2.5 www.snapfiles.com	FREE	Image recovery software	Win	Image recovery software for accidentally deleted files		NOT YET TESTED
	ToneUp Studio www.toneupsudio.com	£8	Raw converter/ Nikon custom curves	Win	An inexpensive alternative to Nikon Capture with the added capability to upload custom curves to your Nikon	85% What Digital Camera	TESTED JUN 2006
	Tesco PhotoRestyle www.tesco.com	£10	Image editing suite	Win	Basic editing tools and no Raw support but fantastic value for money	91% What Digital Camera GOLD AWARD	TESTED FEB 2007
	Andy B/W Pro www.nesi.com	£10	Bibble plug-in	Win/ Mac	A great Bibble plug-in that simulates conventional B/W film and paper combinations.	85% What Digital Camera	TESTED OCT 2006
	Software Imaging Inksaver www.inksaver.com	£17.50	Printing software	Win	A useful program that will save you money and has virtually no effect on print quality under normal use	89% What Digital Camera	TESTED APR 2005
	Acdsee Pro Photo Manager www.acdsee.co.uk	£18	Basic editing software	Win	Basic but easy to use and offers more control than most dedicated software packages	80%	TESTED JULY 2007
	StudioLine Photo Classic 3 www.studioline.net	£20	Image editing suite	Win	Impressive functionality and more intuitive than older versions, this has most of the tools a hobbyist needs	81%	TESTED JUN 2006
	Carbonite PC Backup www.carbonite.com	£25	Online-backup software	Win	Simple and cost-effective way of backing up your documents	87% What Digital Camera	TESTED JUN 2007
	Ulead Photo Impact 12 www.ulead.co.uk	£25	Slide-show and disc creation	Win	A cheaper rival to Photoshop (score based on previous version)	88% What Digital Camera	TESTED FEB 2005
	Roxio Photo Suite 8 www.roxio.com	£30	Organising and editing Suite	Win	Useful tools and some unique features make this budget editor worth a look		NOT YET TESTED
	FixerLabs FixerBundle www.fixerlabs.com	£30	Image Optimisation plug-ins	Win/ Mac	FocusFixer and NoiseFixer work very well and all the tools are intuitive to use.	83% What Digital Camera	TESTED MAR 2007
	Bibble Lite 4.9.5 www.bibblelabs.com	£35	RAW converter	Win/ Mac	Plenty of features that allow silky looking images and it works with Adobe Bridge	91% What Digital Camera GOLD AWARD	TESTED AUG 2007
	Iridius Pro Actions LI www.iridius.co.uk	£40	Photoshop actions suite	Win/ Mac	For the busy photographer, the Iridius Action set is a fantastic, time-saving lifesaver	91% What Digital Camera GOLD AWARD	TESTED NOV 2004
	BreezeBrowser Pro www.breezesys.com	£45	Raw converter/ image browser	Win	Good general purpose browser with Raw support, especially for Canon cameras	84%	TESTED OCT 2005
	DxO Optics Pro 4.5 www.dxo.com	£40 Basic	Image correction	Win/ Mac	Fantastic workflow and optical correction tool - try the download and prepare to be amazed	91% What Digital Camera GOLD AWARD	TESTED MAY 2007
	Silver Oxide Landscape www.silveroxide.com	£45	Photoshop plug-in	Win/ Mac	A pair of plug-ins to enhance colour and tonality in landscape pictures	80%	TESTED MAY 2006

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			TYPE	PLATFORM	SUMMARY	SCORES	
	Fixerlabs SizeFixer SLR www.fixerlabs.com	£50	Resizing software	Win/ Mac	*Reasonably effective upscaling but slow compared to similar products*	69%	TESTED MAR 2006
	PixelGenius Photokit Sharpener www.pixelgenius.com	£55	Image sharpening	Win/ Mac	*Image sharpening workflow tool, from capture to output*	91%	TESTED MAY 2004
	PixelGenius Photokit Color www.pixelgenius.com	£55	Photoshop colour tools/ effects	Win/ Mac	*Time-saving software capable of a wide variety of excellent results*	90%	TESTED MAY 2005
	DxO FilmPack 1.1 www.dxo.com	£60	Image editor	Win/ Mac	*Fantastic software for replicating film-looks from digital images*	90%	TESTED JUN 2007
	iCorrect Edit Lab Pro 5.0 www.colourconfidence.com	£60	Colour correction	Win/ Mac	*Powerful colour correction tools for the beginner or advanced photographer*	86%	TESTED APR 2006
	Magix Photo & Graphic Design www.magix.net	£60	Editing and graphics software	Win	*Easy to use image editing and graphics design software*		NOT YET TESTED
	Adobe PS Elements 5.0 www.adobe.com	£70	Image editing suite	Win/ Mac (v4)	*Great features and all the good bits of Photoshop CS2 without the hefty cost*	90%	TESTED NOV 2006
	Photo Zoom Pro 2 www.softwaic.com	£75	Resizing software	Win/ Mac	*Superior alternative to Photoshop for high-quality enlargements*	84%	TESTED JUN 2007
	Real Viz Stitcher Express 2 www.dcpsystems.com	£80	Panorama creator	Win/ Mac	*Simple interface and powerful stitching at a fair price. (Score based on previous version)*	88%	TESTED OCT 2005
	Imagenomic Potrature	£85	Portrait editing software	Win/ Mac	*An essential plug-in for enchancing and manipulation portrait shots*	90%	TESTED OCT 2007
	Corel Paint Shop Pro XI www.corel.co.uk	£90	Image editing suite	Win	*Not a major improvement over PSP X but still offers a lot of value for money*	89%	TESTED NOV 2006
	Genuine Fractals 5 www.dcpsystems.com	£105	Resizing plug-in	Win/ Mac	*Good results for anyone who wants to make large prints from their digital photographs*	88%	TESTED SEP 2005
	AlienSkin Exposure www.alienskin.com	£100	Image editor/ PS plug-in	Win/ Mac	*Fun and useful software that mimics the unique characteristics of individual film stocks*	85%	TESTED APR 2006
	Extensis Portfolio 8 www.extensis.com	£100	Digital asset management	Win/ Mac	*Powerful, fast and professional DAM system, but complicated for home use*	86%	TESTED MAR 2006
	Capture One LE 3.7.7 www.phaseone.com	£100	Raw workflow	Win/ Mac	*Simplified version of Raw software Capture One (see below)*		NOT YET TESTED
	Nikon Capture NX www.nikon.co.uk	£120	Raw-converter/ organiser	Win/ Mac	*Nikon's premium Raw converter is one of the best tools for getting the best from your NEF files*	87%	TESTED OCT 2006
	iViewMedia Pro 3 www.iview-multimedia.com	£120	Digital asset management	Win/ Mac	*Catalogues and organises a wide variety of formats quickly and effectively, with useful new features*	87%	TESTED FEB 2006
	Vertus Fluid Mask www.vertustech.com	£160	Cut out plug-in	Win/ Mac	*Sophisticated tool makes cut-outs easy to perform*	88%	TESTED JUN 2006
	Adobe Lightroom 1.0 www.adobe.com	£205	Raw workflow and editing	Win/ Mac	*Very cool workflow solution for non-destructive file management and editing*	90%	TESTED APR 2007
	Apple Aperture 1.5 www.apple.com	£219	Raw workflow and editing	Mac	*The latest update improves on v1.0, but not as fast as Lightroom and only for Mac users*	88%	TESTED JUN 2007
	Capture One www.phaseone.com	£250	Raw workflow	Win/ Mac	*Well-respected and powerful Raw workflow tool. A cheaper LE version is also available*	89%	TESTED OCT 2005
	Corel Draw X3 www.corel.com	£350	Graphics editing suite	Win	*Full graphic suite includes the excellent Photo-Paint X3 software*	87%	TESTED APR 2006
	Adobe Photoshop CS3 www.adobe.com	£570	Image editing suite	Win/ Mac	*The most comprehensive editing software on the market, building on the success of CS2*	90%	TESTED APR 2007

What Digital Camera Contacts

Check out these UK distributors' and manufacturers' websites for more info

CAMERAS
Acer www.acer.co.uk
enQ www.benq.co.uk
Canon www.canon.co.uk
Casio www.exilim.co.uk
Fujifilm www.fujifilm.co.uk
Kodak www.kodak.co.uk
Leica www.leica.co.uk
Nikon www.nikon.co.uk
Olympus www.olympus.co.uk
Panasonic www.panasonic.co.uk
Pentax www.pentax.co.uk
Ricoh www.ricoh-cameras.co.uk
Samsung www.samsungcamera.co.uk
Sigma www.sigma-imaging-uk.com
Sony www.sony.co.uk

LENSES
Canon www.canon.co.uk
Leica www.leica.co.uk
Lensbaby www.intro2020.co.uk
Nikon www.nikon.co.uk
Olympus www.olympus.co.uk
Pentax www.pentax.co.uk
Schneider www.schneideroptics.com
Sigma www.sigma-imaging-uk.com
Sony www.sony.co.uk
Tamron www.intro2020.co.uk
Tokina www.intro2020.co.uk
Zeiss www.zeiss.com/photo

FILTERS
B&W www.bwfilter.com
Cokin www.cokin.co.uk
Hitech www.formatt.co.uk
Hoya www.intro2020.co.uk
Lee www.leefilters.com
Sigma www.sigma-imaging-uk.com
Tiffen www.tiffen.com

FLASHGUNS
Canon www.canon.co.uk
Jessops www.jessops.com
Metz www.intro2020.co.uk
Nikon www.nikon.co.uk
Olympus www.olympus.co.uk
Panasonic www.panasonic.co.uk
Pentax www.pentax.co.uk
Sigma www.sigma-imaging-uk.com
Sony www.sony.co.uk
Sunpak www.intro2020.co.uk

PRINTERS
Canon www.canon.co.uk
Epson www.epson.co.uk
HP www.hp.co.uk
Kodak www.kodak.co.uk
Lexmark www.lexmark.co.uk
Olympus www.olympus.co.uk
Sagem www.sagem.co.uk
Sony www.sony.co.uk

INKJET PAPER
Fotospeed www.fotospeed.com
Ilford www.ilford.com
Innova www.innovaart.com
Kentmere www.kentmere.co.uk
Hahnemuhle www.hahnemuehle.com
Harman www.harman-inkjet.com
Olmec www.ici-imagedata.com
Permajet www.novadarkroom.com

SCANNERS
Canon www.canon.co.uk
Epson www.epson.co.uk
Microtek www.microtek.co.uk
HP www.hp.co.uk
Nikon www.nikon.co.uk
Plustek www.plustek.com/uk

DIGITAL STORAGE
Archos www.archos.com
Epson www.epson.co.uk
Innoplus www.inneplus.com
Jobo www.jobo.com
LaCie www.lacie.com/uk
Maxtor www.maxtor.com
Smartdisk www.smartdisk.com
Vosonic www.vosonic.com

MEDIA CARDS
Delkin www.delkin.com
Fujifilm www.fujifilm.com
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Lexar www.lexar.com
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Pretec www.pretec.com
Sandisk www.sandisk.co.uk
Sony www.sony.co.uk

TRIPODS AND HEADS
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Gitzo www.gitzo.co.uk
Gorillapod www.intro2020.co.uk
Jessops www.jessops.com
Manfrotto www.manfrotto.co.uk
National Geographic no website
Slik www.intro2020.co.uk
Uni-Loc www.ukray.com/uniloc
Velbon www.intro2020.co.uk
Wimberley www.tripodhead.com

BAGS
Billingham www.billingham.co.uk
CCS www.fotolynx.co.uk
Crumpler www.intro2020.co.uk
Domke www.tiffen.com
Heritage www.heritage-bag.com
Jessops www.jessops.com
Kata www.kata-bag.com
Lowepro www.lowepro.com
National Geographic no website
Peli www.peli.com
Storm www.stormcase.com
Tamrac www.intro2020.co.uk
Tenba www.tenba.com

STUDIO/LIGHTING
Bowens www.bowens.co.uk
Elinchrom www.theflashcentre.com
Hedler www.theflashcentre.com
Interfit www.interfitphotographic.com
Kaiser www.kaiser-fototechnik.de/en
Lastolite www.lastolite.com

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- High precision wide area AF
- 3.0" LCD with Live View mode
- DIGIC III processor
- EOS Integrated Cleaning System
- Magnesium alloy body

Our Low Competitive prices TBC

Canon EOS 1Ds Mk III

SRP £5,999.99 Lens sold separately

- 21 MP full frame CMOS
- 14-bit A/D processing
- 5 fps, max. burst of 56 JPEGs
- Dual "DIGIC III" processors
- High precision wide area AF
- EOS Integrated Cleaning System
- ISO 100-1600 range (L:50 H:3200)

3.0" LCD with Live View mode

Our Low Competitive prices TBC

TOP SELLER!

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- 10.1 Mega pixels
- 3fps continuous shooting with up to 27 JPEG shots per burst
- 2.5" LCD Screen
- Smooth and easy operation
- Self Cleaning Sensor Unit

lens sold separately Body SRP £649.99

Body Price **£435.00!!**

+ 18-55mm **£495.00!!***

For even more money saving packages on the EOS 400, please visit our website

Canon EOS 30D

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- 5 fps • 2.5" LCD
- Rugged Magnesium Alloy Body

lens sold separately

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- 3 fps 60 JPEG image burst • DIGIC II

lens sold separately SRP £2539.99

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EOS 5D + 2 x Canon BP 511 Batts. **£1538.00**

EOS 5D + 24-105mm f4 L IS USM **£1999.00**

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Canon Digital Cameras

PowerShot A550	£119.00
PowerShot A570 IS	£159.99
Digital IXUS 70 Black	£159.00
Digital IXUS 75	£199.00
Digital IXUS 850 IS	£229.99
Digital IXUS 950 IS	£249.99*
Digital IXUS 900 Ti	£215.00
PowerShot S5 IS	£349.00
PowerShot G7	£309.00

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PowerShot A650 IS	EF 14mm f/2.8L II USM
PowerShot A720 IS	EF-S 55-250mm f/4-5.6 IS
PowerShot SX100 IS Black	EF-S 18-55mm f/3.5-5.6 IS
PowerShot SX100 IS Silver	
Digital IXUS 860 IS Black	
Digital IXUS 860 IS Silver	
Digital IXUS 960 IS Silver	
PowerShot G9	

Prices are yet to be confirmed, but as usual, we will be one of the most competitive people in the UK. Please visit our website for more details.

CANON LENSES

See our website for bundle pricing with filters

EF 14mm f/2.8 L	£1,349.00	EF 400mm f/5.6L USM	£866.00
EF 15mm f/2.8 Fish-eye	£530.00	EF 500mm f/4.0L USM IS	£4,049.00
EF 20mm f/2.8 USM	£329.00	EF 600mm f/4.0L USM IS	£5,574.00
EF 24mm f/1.4 L USM	£879.00	TSE 24mm f/3.5 L	£899.00
EF 24mm f/2.8 USM	£319.00	TSE 45mm f/2.8	£899.00
TSE 24mm f/3.5 L	£899.00	TSE 90mm f/2.8	£899.00
EF 28mm f/1.8 USM	£319.99	EF-S 10-22mm f/3.5-4.5 USM	£515.00
EF 28mm f/2.8	£137.00	EF 16-35mm f/2.8L II USM NEW	£1099.00
EF 35mm f/1.4 L USM	£939.00	EF 17-40mm f/4L USM	£479.00
EF 35mm f/2	£187.00	EF-S 17-55mm f/2.8 IS USM	£644.99
EF 50mm f/1.2L USM	£969.99	EF-S 17-85mm f/4-5.6 IS USM	£378.00
EF 50mm f/1.4 USM	£248.00	EF-S 18-55mm f/3.5-5.6 (unboxed)	£65.00
EF 50mm f/1.8 II	£74.99	EF 20-35mm f/3.5-4.5 USM	£299.99
EF 50mm f/2.5 Macro	£194.99	EF 24-70mm f/2.8L USM	£799.99
EF-S 60mm f/2.8 USM Macro	£228.00	EF 24-85mm f/3.5-4.5 USM	£249.00
MP-E 65mm f/2.8 1-5xMacro	£719.00	EF 24-105mm f/4 L IS USM (unboxed)	£579.99
EF 85mm f/1.2L II USM	£1,259.00	EF 24-105mm f/4 L IS USM	£629.00
EF 85mm f/1.8 USM	£269.99	EF 28-105mm f/3.5-4.5 II USM	£184.00
EF 100mm F2 USM	£314.00	EF 28-105mm f/4-5.6 Non USM	£109.99
EF 100mm f/2.8 Macro USM	£389.00	EF 28-105mm f/4-5.6 USM	£149.00
EF 135mm f/2 L USM	£719.00	EF 28-135mm f/3.5-5.6 IS USM	£325.00
EF 135mm f2.8 Soft Focus	£285.00	EF 28-200mm F3.5-5.6 USM	£279.99
EF 180mm f/3.5L USM Macro	£999.00	EF 28-300mm f3.5-5.6L IS USM	£1,599.00
EF 200mm f/2.8L USM	£539.00	EF 55-200mm f/4.5-5.6 II USM	£119.00
EF 300mm f/2.8 L USM	£2,935.00	EF 70-200mm f2.8 L IS USM	£1,259.00
EF 300mm f/4.0L USM IS	£888.00	EF 70-200mm f/2.8L USM	£929.00
EF 400mm f/2.8L USM IS	£4,869.00	EF 70-200mm f/4 L IS USM	£745.00
EF 400mm f/4 DO IS USM	£4,199.00	EF 70-200mm f/4L USM	£429.00

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- Instant power-up in just 0.15 seconds, with a shutter release time lag of a mere 50 milliseconds

D200 + 17-55mm f2.8 G DX	£1648.00
D200 + 18-200 f3.5-5.6 VR DX	£1,299.99
D200 + 18-70mm f3.5-4.5 DX	£974.00
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AF-G 10.5mm f/2.8 ED AF DX	£448.00
AF-D 14mm f/2.8 ED	£1,149.00
AF-D 16mm f/2.8 ED	£499.00
AF-D 18mm f/2.8 ED	£1,145.00
AF-D 20mm f/2.8	£379.00
AF-D 24mm f/2.8	£299.00
AF-D 28mm f/2.8	£179.00
AF-D 28mm f/1.4	£1409.00
AF-D 50mm f/1.8	£79.00
AF-D 60mm f/2.8 Micro	£277.99
AF-D 85mm f/1.8	£269.00
AF-D 85mm f/1.4	£774.00
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AF-D 180mm f/2.8 IF ED	£509.00
AF-S 200mm f/2 IF-ED VR	£2,399.00
AF-S 300mm f/2.8G IF-ED VR	£2,799.00
AF-S 400mm f/2.8 II IF-ED	£5,449.00
AF-S 500mm f/4 IF-ED II Black	£4,946.00
AF-S 12-24mm f/4G DX IF ED	£679.00
AF-S 17-55mm f/2.8G IF-ED DX	£849.99
AF-D 18-35mm f/3.5-4.5	£374.00
AF-S DX 18-55 mm f/3.5-5.6G ED II	£83.00
AF-S 18-70mm f/3.5-4.5 DX Unboxed	£165.00
AF-S 18-135mm f/3.5-5.6G Unboxed	£215.00
AF-S 18-200mm f/3.5-5.6 ED-IFVR DX	£525.00
AF-D 24-85mm f/2.8-4 IF	£425.00
AF-S 28-70mm f/2.8D IF ED	£1,099.00
AF-G 28-80mm f/3.3-5.6G	£79.99
AF-D 28-105mm f/3.5-4.5 IF	£309.99
AF-G 28-200mm f/3.5-5.6 IF ED S	£159.99
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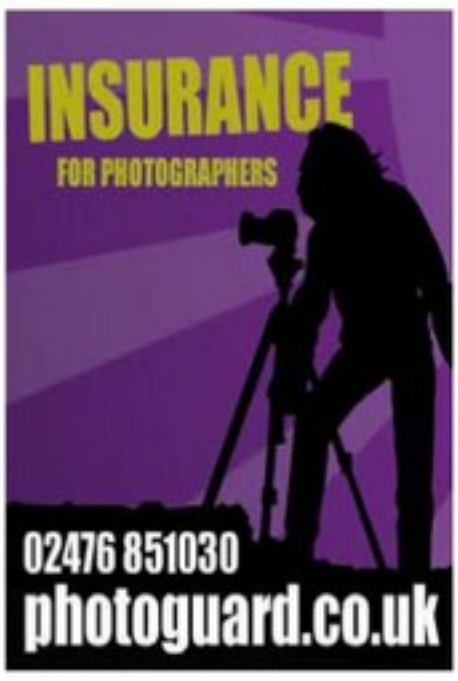

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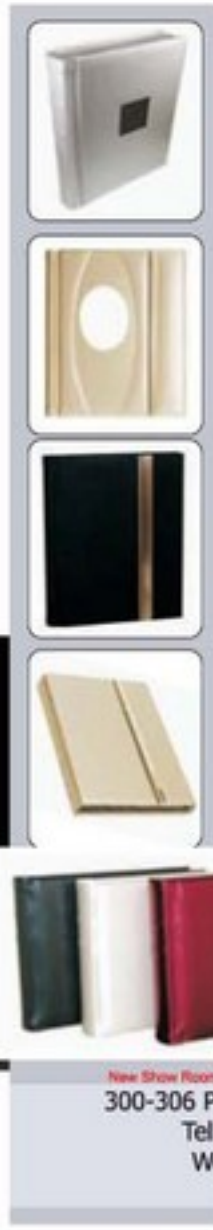

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The Last Word

A parting shot from Matt Golowczynski

The heat is on!

The four new DSLRs from Canon and Nikon have created major excitement around WDC Towers. While the EOS 1Ds Mk III serves the needs of the high end advertising and fashion pro, the Nikon D3 offers all-round appeal thanks to its combination of speed and full-frame sensor.

Of course we shouldn't forget the mid level, or semi-pro models which should appeal to many of our readers. The Nikon D300 and Canon EOS 40D have features which until recently were only found on the Pro models, not to mention the many new technologies that have been included.

Not only has Nikon followed Canon's lead by going to a full-frame sensor, the company has also switched to CMOS, with Sony also announcing a new CMOS 12.5MP full-frame sensor, giving us a clue to the specification of its next Alpha release.

Canon and Nikon still reign supreme in the high-end DSLR market – something both are keen on holding onto, as their new releases show – but it would be refreshing for a third party to enter and give them both a little heat. Perhaps Sony will emerge as the next best thing? Let's just hope that the next few months prove to be as exciting as this month has been…

Substance before style

As much as the DSLR crowd have had their appetites finally satiated, the manufacturers are equally keen to provide for the masses, which the plethora of compacts released this year testifies. At the budget end, the brick-like models of yesteryear are replaced with slimmer, sexier counterparts while optical image stabilisation is working its way into more and more models. Long 18x optical zooms are slowly becoming the bridge camera norm, and the size of LCD screens is slowly creeping up too. Of course, most of this is truly useful and has certainly played its part in allowing people of all ages to take better exposed and sharper pictures.

It could be argued however, that this technology could be responsible for creating a generation of lazy photographers, where results are obtained easier than ever, but at a cost to understanding the fundamentals of photography. Hours of fun are no doubt being had in the digital darkroom, but the continuous introduction of new models does often serve to cloud necessity, with a high megapixel count the usual culprit in consumer engagement. So before you convince yourself that you need an upgrade, remember that there's no substitute for your enthusiasm and continued learning of how to use what's already in your camera bag.

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Autumn Landscapes

Capture the Colours of Autumn p04
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How to Shoot, Edit & Print... Autumn Landscapes

Nature's most photogenic season is coming soon to a tree near you, so get ready!

Autumn is unquestionably the most photogenic season of the year. It's as if the beautiful colours and endless leafy carpets are nature's way of compensating us for any sadness we may feel about the end of summer and the imminent onset of winter. It'll be upon us soon, so get ready to take advantage of the great but brief photo opportunities that autumn offers. To give you some tips and ideas, we've got eight pages of advice from top UK landscape photographer Jeremy Walker, while resident Photoshop expert Philip Andrews shows us how we can improve our shots in post-production.

Nigel Atherton, Editor

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Autumn Landscapes

Views • Lighting • Close-Ups & Still Life • Editing • Gear

Image: Jeremy Walker

Above: Woodlands offer great photo opportunities. This tree, near the Birks of Aberfeldy, Scotland, was shot with a Nikon D2x, 17-35mm f2.8 zoom

Jeremy Walker

Top landscape photographer Jeremy Walker presents his techniques and tips for taking better landscape photos during the glorious autumn season

Top Tips

- **Keep it simple** – Think about the essential elements within your image and omit anything which detracts from this.
- **Get up early** – Catch the early morning light and you'll be rewarded with a softer ambience to work with.
- **Use foreground interest** – Think about what will give your image a sense of scale and dimension.
- **Think about composition** – Don't always place your subject in the middle of the frame – be imaginative!

The wide view

The big autumnal view can be a hard image to capture if you haven't the vast sweeping acreage of New England on your doorstep, but with a little bit of research and planning you should still be able to find suitable woods and forests somewhere in the UK. There's the New Forest, the Ashridge Estate, Birks of Aberfeldy to mention a few and although autumn colours are usually associated with deciduous trees, don't overlook the potential of some types of pine and fir trees. If you are going for the 'big view' approach with a wideangle lens, try to include some foreground interest – a boulder, rock or smattering of colourful leaves, for instance – and don't be afraid to go and collect a carrier bag full of leaves before carefully placing them in your shot. Try composing your shot with something leading the eye into the main point of interest, such as a path, stream or stonewall. Another way of shooting the big view is to use a telephoto lens to isolate a point of interest, remembering to try to keep the composition as simple, neat and tidy as possible to lend eye-catching impact.

Image: Jeremy Walker

Above: By using an 80-200mm lens at 200mm to crop in close, Jeremy has emphasised the pattern of colour in these fir trees

Below: Autumn can be a wet and stormy season and this can be very photogenic. Here the classic rule of thirds has been used to good effect, with the two trees positioned on the vertical intersections and the horizon on the lower third

Image: istockphoto.com

Autumn Landscapes

Views • Lighting • Close-Ups & Still Life • Editing • Gear

Image: Jeremy Hands

Above: Backlit leaves can make great photos, if exposed carefully. Here, Jeremy metered off the leaves to ensure a correct exposure for them while letting the potentially distracting background go almost black.

Lighting and exposure

Different types of weather will give you different types of light, from the clear crisp light that follows a rainstorm to soft shadowless light that comes with mist and fog, with each type useable when shooting autumnal scenes. Don't dismiss dull overcast days as down time when you can't shoot, as these conditions are perfect for shooting in woods and forests when you need to keep the contrast to a minimum and avoid big black shadows and stark highlights from bright sunlight. On the other hand, bright sunlight is great for backlighting leaves and making them radiate colour, especially if you frame them against a dark background. Try shooting with the light coming across your image at 90° to you, which will help bring out texture, shape and form. Exposure control as always is very important; light readings with built-in meters on modern cameras are getting towards foolproof and the exposure latitude with digital is incredible but you still have to be very careful with burning out your highlights. Check the histogram on the camera monitor to make sure you are within acceptable tolerances and, as a starting point, meter for the mid-tones. Not everything has to be shot at f/22 and at 1/500th of a second, so try shooting wide open and using a shallow depth of field for effect. Think about using slow shutter speeds for blurred wind-blown leaves and branches – experimenting won't cost anything. Such are the joys of shooting digitally.

Image: istockphoto.com

Above: Don't forget to look up as well as down for photo opportunities!

Image: istockphoto.com

Exposure Tips

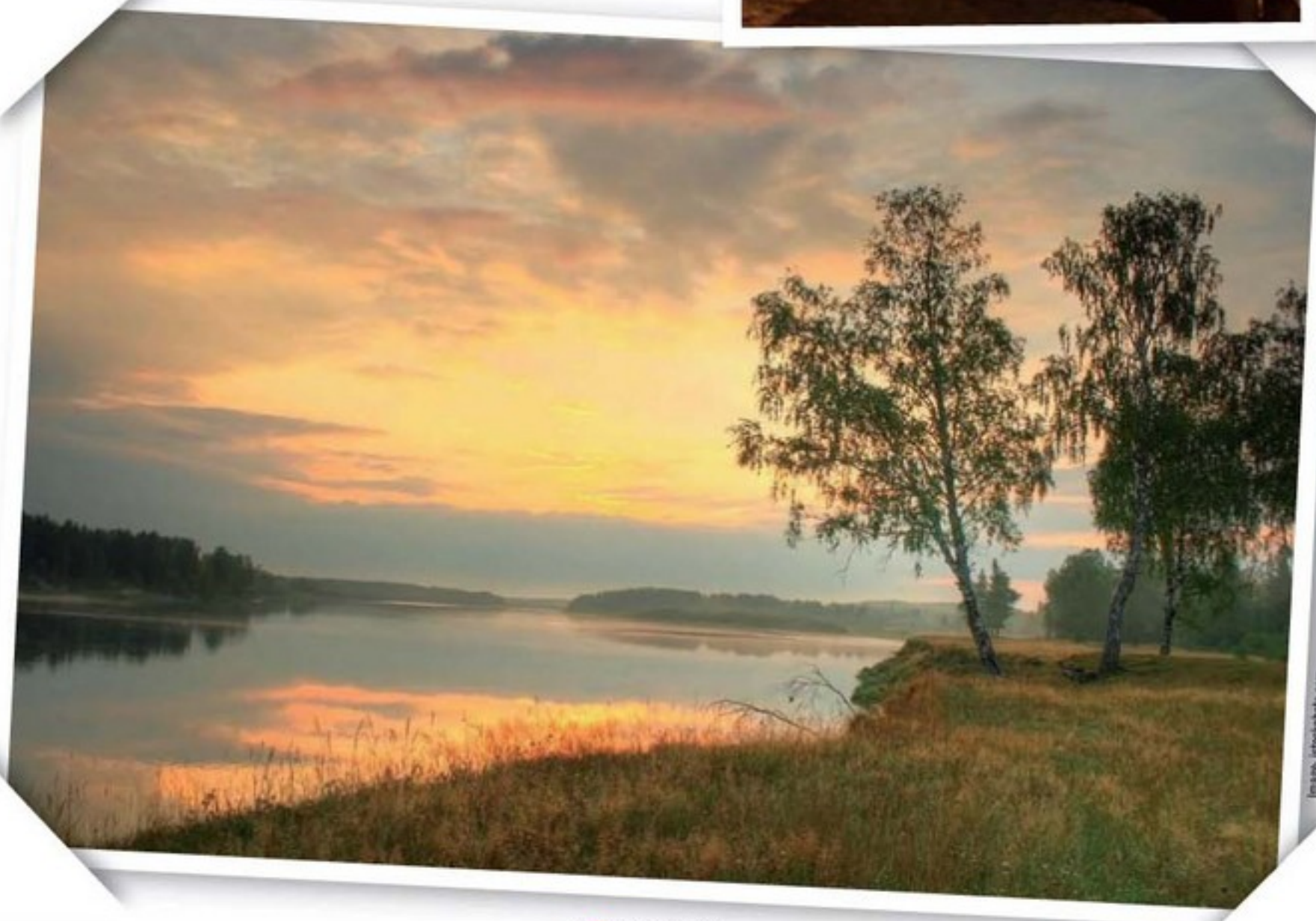
- **Histogram** – Use your camera's histogram to check your image is correctly exposed.
- **Highlights** – Keep an eye on these so that they don't burn out and lose detail. Your histogram may flash these to indicate where the image has been overexposed.
- **Filters** – Use ND grads to balance the exposure between the foreground and the sky.

Above: Mist and fog are common in autumn and can add atmosphere to your shots. Here, by shooting into the light the foreground trees have become a silhouette.

Right: Even built-up urban areas can provide great photo opportunities if you look.

Below: As with every other season, the best light for landscape photography usually occurs early in the morning or last thing in the evening – with or without a sunrise/sunset to enhance the colours in the sky. With pictures like this that include a lot of sky, be careful over metering. A Neutral Density graduated filter will balance the brightness levels between the sky and the darker foreground, so any sky detail can be preserved without underexposing the ground.

Image: istockphoto.com



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Autumn Landscapes

Close-ups and still life

Just because it's autumn and you want to be out shooting dynamic landscapes, it would be very easy to overlook what might be available in your back garden or the local park. You might not have thought about being a still-life photographer either but there are opportunities for some striking images right on your doorstep.

Forget the wideangle lens for the moment and take a closer look at the autumn colours around you. Go for a 'micro landscape' by isolating a small patch of colour with a medium or long telephoto lens. You don't have to shoot a whole tree; perhaps look at an individual leaf with a macro lens or use a close-up ring to get that little bit closer.

For a classic autumn image, set up a small still life of leaves on your lawn in the evening before a frost is forecast and shoot it the following morning with the leaves etched in ice. A tripod, close-focusing lens and a reflector (or even just a couple of pieces of white card) are all you need and you can be as creative as you like. Try not to touch them once they are frosted, though, or you will destroy the delicate ice patterns. Once you start thinking in terms of shooting close-ups and micro landscapes you'll find that the back garden will have limitless possibilities with the bare minimum of kit.

Image: istockphoto.com

Above: The fruits of harvest time can make for an interesting still life

Image: Jeremy Walker

Above: Frost can add a new dimension to both landscapes and detail shots, so keep an eye on the weather forecast to be prepared. Arranging some leaves into an interesting composition on your lawn the night before an expected frost will give you a ready-made still life the next morning.

Image: istockphoto.com

Above: Take a few leaves home with you to make interesting compositions like this on the kitchen table

Recipe For Success!

Here's why this best-selling landscape shot by Jeremy Walker works so well

Great Use of Colour

The contrast between the bright green of the tree and the deep blue of the background was created by the fact that the tree was lit by sun while the background was in shadow. The result is a landscape with enormous impact in which the lone tree really stands out.

The Checklist

PRE-VISUALISE THE SCENE
It's essential in landscape photography to be able to have a sense of how a scene will record once photographed. Without this ability, Jeremy may well have walked on past this scene.

USE A TRIPOD
Landscapes benefit from a slow, considered approach. Walk around the subject to be sure of selecting the best viewpoint and lighting and, once found, set the camera on a tripod. Not only will this enable you to fine-tune your composition but it will also allow you to use a small aperture for maximum depth of field while achieving optimum image sharpness.

SEE THINGS DIFFERENTLY
While the standard kit lens lets you get good shots in most situations, it's worth investing in a wideangle or telephoto lens as these enable you to look at the world in a different way and find pictorial opportunities you wouldn't otherwise see. Don't just rely on lenses for this, though. Experiment with low and high viewpoints, and don't forget to turn the camera to portrait format to see what this offers.

Superb Lighting

Jeremy found this scene early in the morning when the sun was low and striking the tree from the side. This has created a strong contrast between those areas lit by the sun and those in shadow that brings the scene to life and provides a great sense of atmosphere.

Harmonious Composition

Jeremy used a telephoto lens to isolate the tree from its background, and placed it in the centre of the frame to create an appealing symmetrical composition.

Sharpness

As well as using a study tripod and cable release, Jeremy's choice of a Nikkor 80-200mm f/2.8 zoom lens (at 200mm) ensured sharp detail in what could otherwise have resulted in a big green mess!

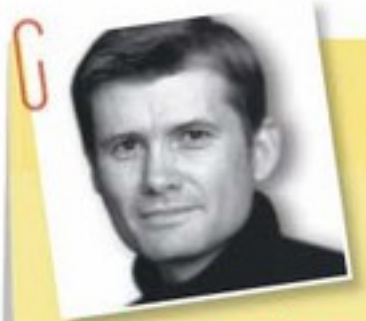
Perfect Exposure

High-contrast lighting can play havoc with exposure meters, as they struggle to retain detail in both highlight and shadow areas, especially when shooting JPEGs. Jeremy used the Raw mode and exposed for the sunlit half of the tree, which has enabled him to retain full detail in the shadows.

Autumn Landscapes

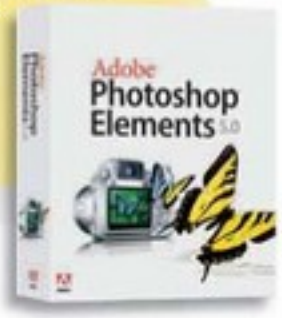
Simple steps to...

Enhancing Your Photos



Philip Andrews

Author of the internationally bestselling Adobe Photoshop Elements for Photographers books, (£19.99, Focal Press), what Philip doesn't know about Elements isn't worth knowing.



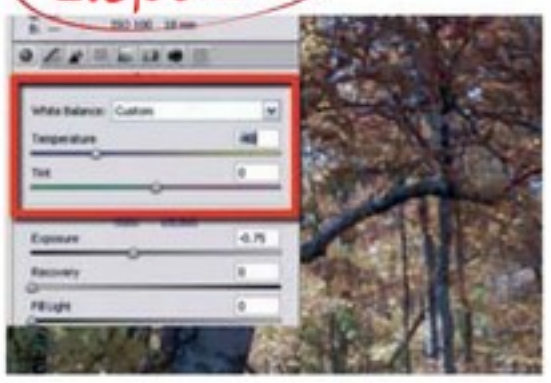
One of the keys to producing great autumn landscape photos is colour. Controlling the colour in your photos starts when you select the scene and continues with careful capture control, but comes into its own when you get back to the desktop. Never before has the photographer had so much control over the hues in their images, with the latest versions of Photoshop, Photoshop Elements, Lightroom and Camera Raw containing a host of features that excel in colour enhancing. Over the next few pages we'll look at some techniques you can use.

Revealing...

Hidden Hues

The colour of the light falling on a subject plays a crucial role in the type of colour that is reflected from its surface. It might be true enough for us to say that the leaves are a golden colour but these orangey hues may be less than vibrant in the photo as the picture was taken in the shade, or on a cloudy day, when the ambient light was quite blue. Adjusting white balance settings can reveal the colours that your own eyes saw but the camera failed to record.

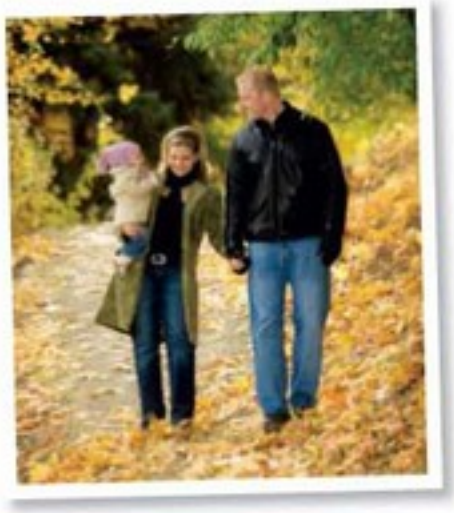
step one



Shoot in Raw for the best options for altering white balance. Adobe Camera Raw (in Photoshop and Elements) and Lightroom both contain dedicated white balance controls in the Basic panel of their development settings. If you haven't captured the file in Raw and you have Photoshop CS3, you can open TIFFs and JPEGs into Adobe Camera Raw (ACR).

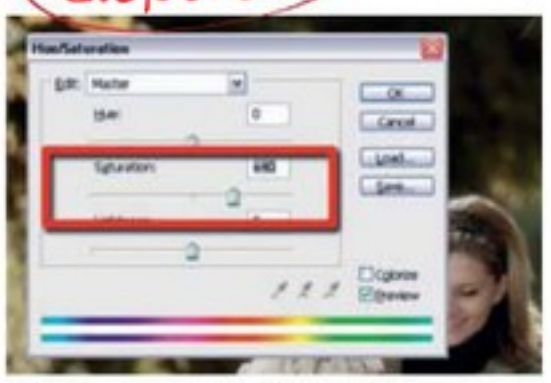
Boosting...

Autumn Hues



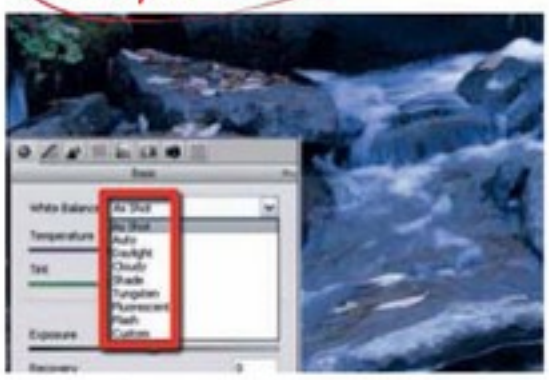
Vibrant hues are what we have come to expect from photos captured in autumn, but sometimes the strength of the colours in our photos do not live up to our expectations. Fortunately, there are several controls in Photoshop, Elements and ACR that can help boost the colour in pictures.

step one



The Saturation slider found in the Basic panel of Adobe Camera Raw or the Hue/Saturation control in both Photoshop and Photoshop Elements is used to control the strength of the colours in the photo. Dragging the slider to the right boosts all the colours, increasing their vividness. This control needs to be used carefully, as all hues are affected.

step Two



There are three ways to adjust white balance in ACR. The first involves selecting from the preset WB modes listed in the drop-down menu at the top of the Basic panel. Revealing the autumn colours might be as easy as selecting a different mode than the one used at capture. Selecting Cloudy or Shade will reduce the blue and boost the golden hues.

step Three

For more manual control, select the WB tool from the ACR toolbar at the top of the dialog. Locate a picture part that is meant to be neutral light grey, but is depicted as light blue, and click on it with the eye-dropper. Automatically, ACR measures the colours of the picture part, calculates how far from neutral they are, then corrects the whole image.

step Four

The last technique involves the Temperature and Tint sliders in the Basic panel. The Temperature control works in the blue-yellow range; the blue cast in the photo can be removed by dragging the slider to the right. The Tint slider adjusts magenta and green tones and is most often used for neutralising photos taken under fluorescent light.

step Two

You can increase the strength of your picture's colours with a Hue/Saturation adjustment layer, before masking associated areas to modify how the saturation changes affect specific picture parts. Select the mask thumbnail and choose a soft-edged black brush with a low opacity. Paint over the areas where you want to reduce the saturation.

step Three

The Vibrance slider is a new feature in ACR for Photoshop and Elements. Vibrance also boosts colours, but unlike the Saturation control, it concentrates its changes on the desaturated hues in the photo and offers some protection for skin tones.

step Four

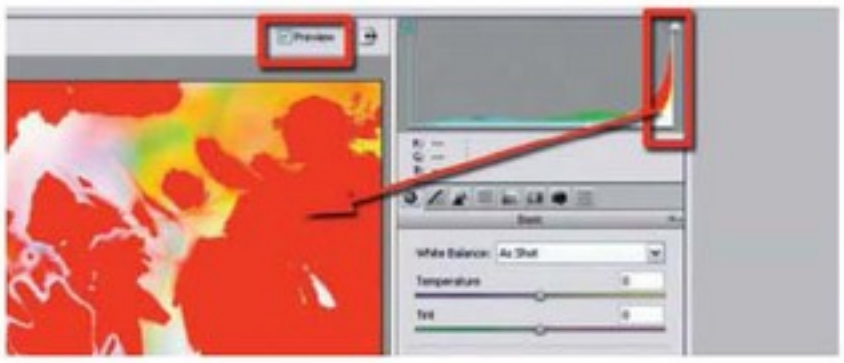
Alternatively, you can select which colours to boost individually with the sliders in the HSL/Grayscale panel of ACR. Here, the colour in our photo is broken into eight categories rather than three (red, green and blue). After selecting the Saturation tab from the top of the panel you can selectively control the strength of any of these colours.

Simple steps to...

Creating Printable Colour

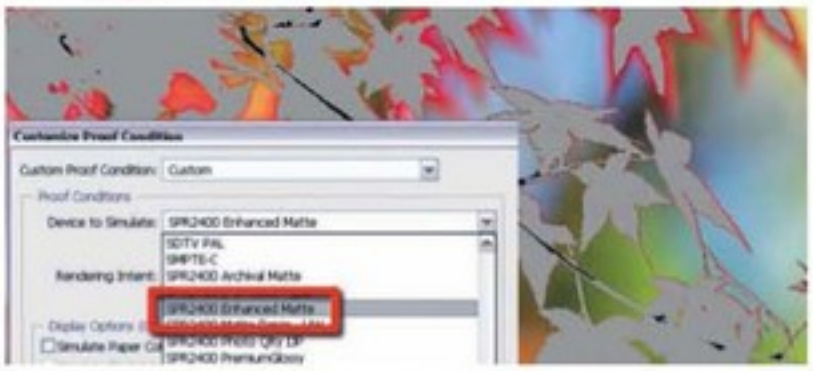
It is easy to assume that the best way to ensure the colours of autumn shine through your pictures is to grab the Saturation slider, in the Hue/Saturation control, and drag it all the way to the right. This is quick and easy but you may get a few surprises when you come to print, as the vibrant hues you see on screen, print out as flat poster-colours lacking the rich details of the original photo (see pic right, where the gamut warning highlights problem areas). Here are some ways to ensure that you retain the colour details in your images.

step one



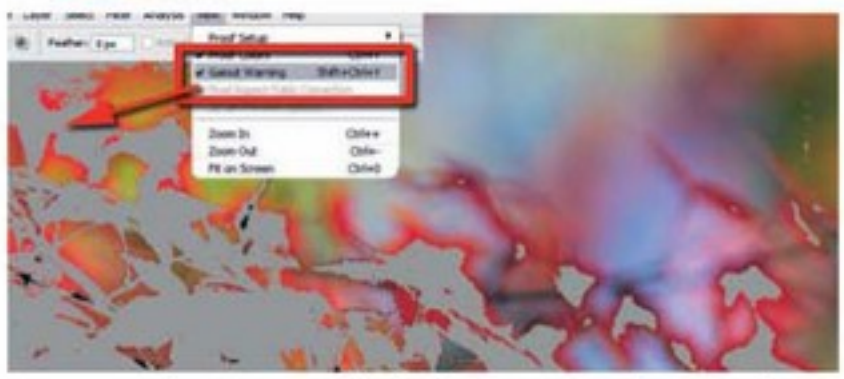
For those who prefer to capture in Raw mode, retaining details starts in the conversion process. Before adjusting the colours in your photo make sure that the Preview option, at the top of the dialogue, is selected. Next, click onto the black and white clipping warnings (top right and left of the histogram in the latest version of ACR – Adobe Camera Raw). Now when you use the tone and colour sliders to enhance your image you will be able to preview any clipping that occurs. Red or blue areas appearing in your photo indicate that detail is being lost so you should adjust the slider settings until they disappear.

step Two



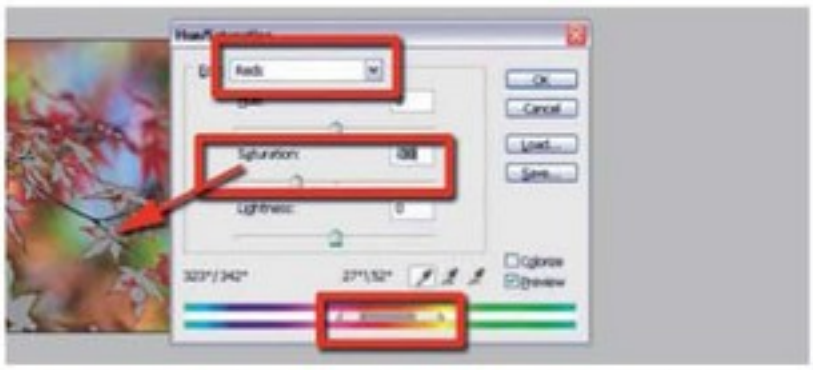
Once the file has been converted, and passed to Photoshop for further enhancement, you can still ensure that any colour changes are not causing printable details to disappear by soft-proofing the photo with the colour characteristics of your printer. The technique requires several steps; start by selecting **View > Proof Setup > Custom** and then choose your printer's profile – and maybe media as well – from the menu. Your photo is now being simulated on screen as it will be printed.

step Three



Now return to the View menu and select the **Gamut Warning** option. This feature previews the areas of the colours that are outside of the printable range (the gamut), displaying them as a grey mask. It is an indication that unless rectified, these areas will be printed as flat colours with no details. The amount of grey previewed in the photo will depend on the range of colours that can be printed by your printer/paper combination and how saturated the colours are in the photo itself.

step Four

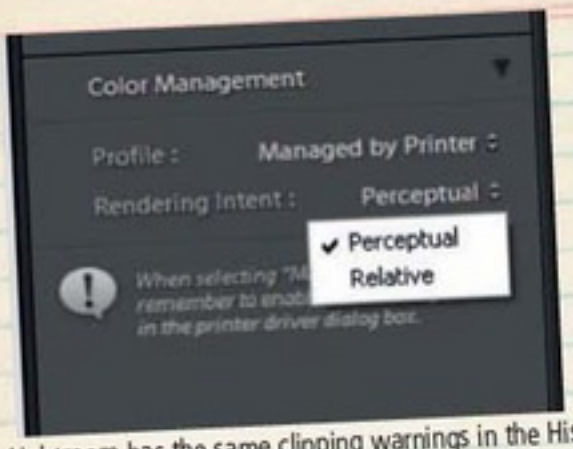


To alter the colour in the photo to suit your printer, make sure that the Gamut preview is still active and then add a new Hue/Saturation Adjustment layer. Dragging the Saturation slider to the left will reduce the out-of-gamut problems but will also reduce the strength of colours that are within gamut, so select the range of colours from the Edit menu that are most affected – here, it is the reds. Reduce the saturation of the reds, adjusting the colour range if needed using the sliders at the bottom of the dialogue until they are more within the gamut.

step Five

When it comes to print, there are some more adjustments that need to be made. Firstly, the same print profile used for soft-proofing needs to be selected in the print dialogue. Next, the Rendering Intent should be set to **Perceptual** or **Relative Colorimetric**. Perceptual aims to recreate the visual appearance of the original photo while manipulating any colours that still remain out-of-gamut into the range that can be output by the printer. Relative Colorimetric also accounts for out-of-gamut colours but with less adjustment of hues that are within the gamut to begin with.

Lightroom



Lightroom has the same clipping warnings in the Histogram (in the Develop module), and can adjust the rendering intent used for output in the Print module. Elements also has clipping warning options via ACR and rendering intent settings in the Print dialogue. But neither Lightroom nor Elements has a gamut warning feature like Photoshop's.

Essential Gear

Jeremy Walker reveals what's in his kitbag

Standard lens

For general shots my **Nikon 35-70mm f2.8** is a superb midrange zoom with the added benefit of a close-up facility – ideal for shooting those little still-life shots on the lawn or close-ups of frosted berries hanging in the hedgerows.

DSLR

You can use a compact but obviously you'll get better results from a DSLR. I use a **Nikon D2x.** It's tough, rugged, handles well and produces excellent files.

Macro lens

A dedicated macro lens is useful for extreme close-up work, such as individual leaves, bugs and stuff. My **Nikon 105mm f2.5 macro** is also a short telephoto, which lets me step back for a more comfortable working distance from the subject.

Cable release

I use a **Nikon MC30 electronic cable release** to release the shutter without touching the camera, for sharper pictures. You could also use a remote release (pictured).

Wideangle lens

A wideangle lens is essential for those autumn landscape shots. You may find that the 18mm end of your standard zoom is wide enough but if not you could look at a superwide zoom. My **Nikon 17-35mm f2.8** is useful for dramatic, wide landscape views.

Telephoto lens

For those nice long shots where you want to pull the image in and isolate sections of a scene you'll need a telephoto zoom. I use the **Nikon 80-200mm f2.8**.

Plus...

- A pen knife
- An OS map of the area
- A carrier bag for collecting leaves to place in the foreground
- A pair of secateurs for a bit of judicious pruning
- Waterproofs
- A flask of coffee and a bar of chocolate!
- Small waterproof picnic rug

Filters

I never go anywhere without the following filters:

- A set of **Lee ND grads** for exposure control.
- A set of **Lee ND standards**, for increasing the exposure to introduce blur or movement in water or wind blown leaves.
- A **Lee circular polariser** to help saturate colour and get rid of reflections from shiny leaves.

Folding reflector

To bounce light back into the shadows of close-ups or still-lifes (white card is OK), I use a **Lastolite folding reflector**.

Send us your best Autumn landscapes and WIN a Gorillapod

Now that you've read our tips and techniques, why not get out your camera and put it to good use? Send us your very best autumn landscape photographs and you could win yourself a fantastic Gorillapod from Joby worth £49.99! With its unique design, the Gorillapod can be wrapped around trees or posts, getting into those awkward places your tripod just can't manage, and provides great stability for your DSLR system. For further details on submiiting your images, see below.

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